



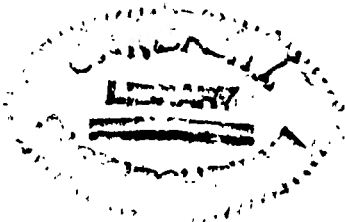
PRAIRIE POT-POURRI

IS GRATEFULLY INSCRIBED

*To the early days and the weary ways
Enshrined in the sunset land;
To a kindly voice that bade grief rejoice,
And the clasp of a friendly hand.*

Regina, N. W. T., July 6th, 1895.

"MARY MARKWELL"
MAR 8 1918
Hayes. HAK
J. A. 17







A BUNCH OF PRAIRIE FLOWERS



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North-West Territories.

(Suggested by "The Seven Provinces," by Hon. G. W. Ross.)

Youngest of all I come—
Across my brow the modest blush of youth
And from my lisping tongue but words of truth.
Yon little Island by Atlantic's shore
Boasts royal lineage, I claim more.
Evangeline's grand poet soul bursts forth in song
Acadian sweet—I speak the strong,
The sturdy kingly hearts of pioneers
Who wait the harvest watered by their tears.
New Brunswick boasts her rivers, pines, her bowers,
Her maples fragrance breathing, these too ours ;
While dark bright-eyed Quebec boats battle grounds—
Alas ! we too weep o'er some lonely mounds.
Ontario calls aloud, chants of her isles,
Niagara, like strong-limbed swain, our love beguiles ;
Magic those islands upon St. Lawrence breast,
 wooing the weary wanderer to ecstatic rest.
And Manitoba, half-sister of my own,
Sings her rolling plains, with wheat and flower o'ergrown ;
Her magic city where two rivers meet,
And bear my harvest far-famed to her feet.
Across my breast golden Columbia calls,
Beckon her groves, her gorges, her majestic falls ;
The tented miner, see his pick-eye gleam
And flash the golden promise of his morning dream !
And now of all the wealth my sisters' songs proclaim,
What do I sing ? Behold my fields of grain !
Boundless and broad, bonded not, all free,

NORTH-WEST TERRITORIES.

Outreaching arms to all. Come to the West and be
A king crowned with the jewels twain
Of peace and plenty—unknown here twin-demons greed and gain.
Others may sing of greatness. Freedom, Peace and Rest
I sing. And Oh ! tired heart, *Home's Kingdom* is the best !



The La-de-dah from London.

The La-de-dah from London was taking in everything with an amused eye, a supercilious smile upon his aristocratic features which blended with the classical outlines of an ancestry dating back to the Norman Conqueror—as he had with special emphasis proved to Dick Workman, his traveling companion on the monotonous journey from Montreal to Winnipeg—before Manitoba the Mecca of the emigrant in 1879, was reached.

They were seated at the breakfast table that first morning at the 'Queens' and as I have said, watching—the La-de-dah with an amused eye—the kaleidoscopic panorama of loaded trays poised above the heads of deft maids, while fat people, thin people, tall people, short people, old people and young people ~~passed~~ and formed the endless procession going in and out.

"It's awfully jolly don't you know" this scion of a noble ancestry was saying, "and weally ~~afaw~~ all I don't hawf think me Awnt Toe's idea was so awfully bad. You ~~see she~~ wanted me to lawn the difficulties that adinawry people have to—well you know, have to contend with—thaw was that fel'r we pawted with at Fowt Awtha," positively he brushed his own clothes, and wealy, I don't suppose he knew whethew he had a gwandfathaw! Kinajins aw ~~so rich—er—er~~ I mean unsophisticated you know."

"Oh, we're all right," said Dick, longing to haul off and knock some of the aristocratic nonsense out of D. G. Periwinkle-Brown, who had for the last four days made the journey a long and painful recital of his own importance. "You have'nt ~~seen us~~ where we come out strong at all yet; come out to the Saskatchewan with me—I'll show you stuff in flesh and blood that may not have had exactly a speaking acquaintance with their great-great-grandfather but"—Dick was silent out of pure fullness and he paused too, to let the be-frizzled ~~pated~~ maid swing off glibly: "Whitefishbeefsteaksausagesbrownbread~~toast~~ ~~and~~ insteancoffee?"

"There was a delicious mingling of appetite and bewilderment in the helpless glance of the La-de-dah, and Dick relieved the pressure by saying to the lady (everybody was a lady in those days): "Yes, bring me some of both." The La-de-dah repeated Dick's cautious words and sank back helplessly.

D. G. Periwinkle-Brown (with the hyphen if you please) had in his own words "been sent out to Canawda be me Awnt Toe with a view to seein' the raw soide of loife don't ye know, and me Awnt Toe wanted me to cawtch some inspiwation from the peculiahly wild scenewy; to foind subjects for me next picthaw—two were already hangin' in the—Gallery don't ye know; and we were both rathaw nervous over a peculiah pain heah." (point of pain demonstrated by a vague movement of slender fingers in the vicinity of the lower vest button) "Awnt Toe awgued that I should come out to Montreal and Ottawa whaw good shootin' and huntin' might be had—but don't you know it was disappointingly civilized—I had lettaws to Dibbles—of course you don't know Dibbles though, he's Speakaw of the Commons—the Kinajin Commons you know, and Dibbles advoised me to take a twip to the faw North; but don't you know I've found gentlemen—actually, *gentlemen* even heah!" D. G. Periwinkle-Brown's surprise exhibited with this statement was cut short by the return of the pretty maid whom he ogled determinedly and tipped in a way that made him a victim of her attentions during the remainder of his stay at the Queens.

Dick had been back to his Ontario home on a holiday trip after a four years' term of farming in Saskatchewan, and he now agreed to wait over in Winnipeg for his new acquaintance to "rest" before attempting the overland trip across the plains—for in those days the C. P. R. was reaching only baby-fingers, and creepiug, creeping slowly west.

Dick, a big awkward looking fellow, had failed in passing his medical examination four years before, and had tried his relatives beyond endurance by declaring he "did'nt want to go in for the profesh" at all; so it was that he became a pioneer in the Great Lone Land, where he took up farming in no half-hearted way, and was already on the road to success. Pretty Sally Loftus had been the main cause of Dick's home trip this time, and some private arrangement with that little maiden sent him back to the Saskatchewan prepared to roll up his sleeves to win.

D. G. Periwinkle-Brown amused him mightily. His airs and his ancestry, his condescension and his patronizing manner made Dick long

to take him out on the plains where his "stuff" would get a good trial ; and out on the western prairies D. G. Periwinkle-Brown decided to go.

He first sent a cable message to his 'Awnt Toe,' announcing such intention, requesting all letters to be forwarded to Prince Albert, and notifying that relative, with a coolness that amazed Dick, that he had drawn upon her for six hundred pounds that day. Having despatched this, he set out to purchase supplies. Dick had made out a list of necessities in which dried apples, tea, sugar, flour, beans, pork and lard formed the bulk, but the La-de-dah learning it was not easy to obtain "relishes" out west, added to the original list—for his own benefit—a splendid assortment of Crosse and Blackwell's choicest wares, giving to the amazed clerk in the H. B. Co. store *carte blanche*, writing out a cheque so illimitably large that a messenger was forthwith despatched to the bank to learn whether it was o. k. It was found all right, and we may be sure that order was filled with an attention to detail unusual.

Four days were spent in preparation for the trip. The mud was awful ; it was April, and Main street, with its unpretentious stores, was just beginning to take on airs ; the roads were ankle deep with a pasty composition wherein horses were swamped, wagons were mired, ponies stuck fast and whinnied helplessly while being lifted bodily up, and urged along by boards used as props in bad places—the old Red-river-cart, the only thing that went calmly creaking on its way regardless of the depth or density of the native soil.

It was opera time—the McDowell troupe played in the Opera House (?), an unpretentious barn-like structure, used below as meat market and up-stairs—when not in use for theatricals—was gravely and becomingly conducted as a church.

D. G. Periwinkle-Brown had provided tickets for the evening and invited Dick, who, the night being damp, enveloped himself in a big rain-coat. He waited in the hall for the La-de-dah who presently appeared in a natty silk mackintosh ; gaiters above his galoches, a gold-tipped umbrella handle depending from finely gloved fingers, and about his whole appearance so much perfection poor Dick began to feel his own homely comfort uncomfortably homely. They passed out into the light drizzle that was falling ; it was like a London fog the La-de-dah said, and insisted on calling a cab. Dick was going to remonstrate against this extravagance, but noting the elegant attire he thought it might be economy after all, even if it was but a block to the theatre. The cab

arrived, sending out a meteoric shower of mud as it rounded up to the curbstone; almost before they were well seated they were at the door of the building, and Dick did remonstrate when the La-de-dah haughtily gave orders for the "cawwaige to wait."

They followed the usher through crowded aisles—the hall was packed—to the first row in the centre section, and Dick turned after drawing off his top-coat, to observe with horror that his companion was attired in faultless evening dress; an immaculate front shining and expansive, his hair arranged with an eye to effect, his patent-leather uppers reflecting the bare rafters of the unfinished room; his jewelled bosom, his moon-colored gloves, his diamond ring the only glory about him in eclipse; a gorgeous gold-mounted opera-glass which he turned full focus on the rear seats whence came derisive howls and humourous squibs at this unlooked for spectacle.

When the La-de-dah thus turned he brought into full view a fragrant flower, and the broad smile over the house broke into a roar that shook the foundations, while Dick's cheeks burned with vivid mortification. He felt responsible for all this, and in his heart grew the intense hope that never again in this world would he meet with the descendant of conquering kings—rather that he would perish with the conquered.

Dick turned indignant eyes upon the gods, now behaving with wild-west freedom; his own suit of plain Halifax tweed contrasted boldly and badly, but with intensifying sensibleness against D. G. Periwinkle-Brown's costume, and out of sheer shame Dick said: "They're laughing at some fun back there, I guess." "Don't you know" said La-de-dah, leveling his glasses at the grinning rows behind him "I—I think—er—I—think Workman it's—your dress they're lawghing at! You know *gentlemen* always dress for the theataw."

"Let'em laugh," says Dick "there goes the curtain," as the tinkle-inkle of the stage bell sounded.

At that moment two stylishly dressed ladies brushed by and were shown to adjoining seats. They proved to be the pretty waitress and the chambermaid, dressed in extreme style and fashion. D. G. Periwinkle-Brown had that day tipped both handsomly, and to the horror of this descendant of a line of conquering kings, the pretty waitress in passing, reached over a crimson gloved hand and whispered audibly: "Mister Pigwinkle-Brown, wait fer us when it's out, won't ye?"

The cheer that greeted the dainty little stage beauty, Fanny Reeves, who at that moment danced on to the boards, was mistaken by the offended La-de-dah for public recognition of the waitress' confidential call; he rose confusedly, and began to put on his coat, "sit Down!" "tramp on th' dood!" "squash th' fashi'n plate!" were hurled with commingling howls as Dick, by persuasive jerks, forced his enraged companion into the seat; the La-de-dah took up his glass, scornfully and defiantly sweeping the hall with it, then, having annihilated the gods in this crushing way, turned its full beams on the charming little *soubrette*, who was singing—then in the full tide of its popularity—"Does your Mother Know you're out?" The daring little beauty at each final query, turning to the super-elegant young man gazing through the glass, while the house, taking in the allusion, came down in roars.

Dick Workman was in agony. To his relief the La-de-dah at the end of the first act insisted on leaving; this Dick knew was forced on by the red-cheeked chambermaid persisting in winking at the Londoner at cute passages of the dialogue, or poking his ribs jocosely at superior sallies; so it was with some relief and considerable satisfaction they found themselves outside.

"Did you evah?" ~~was the~~ greeting of the La-de-dah as they walked away in a downpour, the cab having apparently disobeyed orders, being nowhere in view.

"Didn't you think it ~~was~~ pretty good—for Canadians?" said Dick, his resentment breaking out in spite of his better feelings.

"Why didn't you tell me it ~~wasn't~~ a place for—gentlemen?" said the La-de-dah.

"What do you mean?" asked Dick, feeling greater and stronger than ever the desire to punch this elegant young man.

"Why—er—of course—I—I ~~mean~~—it was only the—artisan clawss were thaw—er—and common people."

"The Mayor of the city sat just ~~behind~~ you," said Dick with asperity, "and there were men there to-night ~~air~~, that could buy and sell both you and me out and out, and then ~~write a cheque~~ for twice our value in—common sense."

"Ya—s—yas—I've no doubt of it," ~~answered~~ the composed young man, hoisting his umbrella, "I say," ~~he went on~~, "I wish you had gone dressed, don't you know—They were—~~laughing~~ at you—but you din't seem to mind it, did you?"

"No," said Dick grimly, "I didn't mind it at all."

Two days latter the La-de-dah, who had been duly cabled his six-hundred pounds, announced that he was ready for the trip. This being Dick's third overland journey, he understood the necessity of making a proper and judicious disposal of supplies and baggage. There was so much more of the latter than he had bargained for, owing to the purchases of the Englishman, that a second wagon seemed almost a necessity. The Londoner solved the difficulty by going off and in an incredibly short space of time returning with two extra horses, (splendid specimens they were), attached to a brand new democrat, he had bought them with as little remark (or knowledge) as a pair of mummies might show in the purchase of a tomb.

Too, at the last moment great packages began to arrive, duly addressed: "D. G. Perwinkle-Brown, Esq., late of London, Eng.," until out of sheer fear that another conveyance would be a necessity, Dick declared with decision, that positively no more could be taken. Indeed, the wagons presented an imposing sight. Four huge trunks, all exhibiting the imposing address as given above, between those, like bastions, bristled guns, canes, fishing rods, and an easel that refused to fold itself but stuck out magnificently. Every available bit of space was filled, such minor things as groceries and necessaries of Dick's choosing, were stowed away unpretentiously but safely, under a tarpaulin in the wagon.

Dick started off ahead walking beside his conveyance, coarse overalls tucked into stout shoes, a blouse of brown denim, a slouch hat that was proof against the weather, a red handkerchief knotted about his throat and holding the reins in his bare hands.

Perched upon the new wagon, reins drawn taut upon high-stepping steeds, sat the La-de-dah; he was like some gallant knight going forth to conquer; he had dressed himself very carefully in a new and becoming traveling suit, a complete shooting attire—white corduroy breeches, very tight as to the legs, and very baggy in the upper parts; long ribbed hose, and riding boots of the best English manufacture.

The start out caused a prodigious sensation. D. G. Perwinkle-Brown in the expectation of falling in with savages, prepared to receive them in a manner befitting the descendant of conquerors; He fairly bristled with articles of war—pistols from his belted side, a keen edged knife blue in its anxiety to carve some one or something, (and satisfying its unholy thirst later on—in inoffensive porkrinds) his field glass slung

picturesquely over one shoulder and a cataract of pink mosquito netting falling from a broad brimmed hat, driving gauntlets of an expensive make. From the high balcony the chambermaid waved professional linens in happy adieux. D. G. Periwinkle-Brown drove away in state—happy in the knowledge that he was the centre of observation—what more to be desired by an Englishman?"

The long, far-reaching stretch of prairie dotted with bluffs of low brush, the trail meandering by the river sluggishly flowing on, the meadow-lark sweeping and wheeling overhead, small shanties dotting the plain that seemed to reach out and away to eternity, and over all a broad sense of freedom, of power. It was Dick's intention to camp out some fifteen miles on the prairie that night and be ready for an early start on the morrow. He had had considerable start of his companion, but not wishing to make any great speed was always in full view of the La-de-dah. By and bye, being accustomed to the Pall-Mall style of chariot-ship, and regarding etiquette as to prairie trails unnecessary, the Londoner rattled up at a great pace and with a magnificent cracking of whip, *à la* four-in-hand, passed Dick in pomp. This was done as a sort of a highway joke, but came near being a highway catastrophe, the wheels barely escaping colliding.

"What d'ye mean?" roared Dick, drawing rein.

"I say," retorts the Londoner beaming from his perch, "It's no end of jolly fun, eh?"

"You'll have to be careful," said Dick, showing some little annoyance, immediately changing his tone to one of inquiry;—"Where's the tent?"

Previous to starting, the tent had been made into a neat bundle and stowed at the back of Periwinkle-Brown's wagon—it was gone! This necessitated an immediate stop; and although the La-de-dah declared he'd "buy anothaw of the bloomin' things rawthaw than retrace one single step of the delightful jawney," Dick, after hobbling the horses, started back afoot, and in no very good humor. He found the tent lying by the trail where it had fallen, and making a shoulder pack of it, trudged back good-naturedly. The tent was pitched and safely pegged to the ground to the amazement of the Londoner, who looked on with great interest while Dick balanced the centre pole and performed wonders with the canvas. A fire was built in a hole scooped out of the ground, and pretty soon a splendid supper was laid

out; D. G. Periwinkle-Brown busied himself in selecting jellies and other relishes, and he declared the condensed milk "quite amazin'." Beyond the first meal it was exceedingly annoying however, as it spilled over everything, blending perishable luxuries and being voted a "beastly nuisance" thereafter.

The first night camping out upon the prairies gives one a new and vague sensation. You feel as our first parents must have felt in the garden of Eden—alone—The space about you is so illimitable, the silence is so sublime, the world about you is so vague, so far-reaching—You feel a pigmy. Dick spread his blankets and threw himself down for a night's rest; D. G. Periwinkle-Brown having set his camp bed, and donned his pa-jamas, over which he belted his pistols tremblingly awaiting the whoop of the wild Indian and the flourish of the scalping knife.

Some time during the night Dick was awakened by a curious groping or pawing, sound; he did not want to wake his companion, and calculating the exact spot where he supposed the horses had come too close to the tent, he shied a boot with great precision. A howl of pain made Dick jump and roar out:—

"Is that you Brown?"

"Y—a—ss—I—I——"

"What the dev—dickens are you doing over there?" asked Dick, hunting for a match.

"I—I—I'm look—ing faw the —window" chattered the Englishman.

"Looking for what?" roars Dick, lighting up the gloom enough to see his friend, the most awful sight to behold, clad in his pa-jamas, crawling on all fours, his pistols dangling ferociously, a tasseled white silk night-cap above a gash whence a crimson stream trickled. He had rolled out of his bed and was groping helplessly about.

The next day's march was more satisfactory.

They made an early start, everything was ship-shape; this time the tent reposed safely in Dick's wagon, and away they went under the wondrous burst of a prairie sunrise, which must be seen to be half understood.

Settlers' houses now began to drift further apart. The travellers sometimes stopped and went in; the wife—always an Ontario woman it seemed—with homely grace, bustled about; chubby children peeped from concealed corners, while the travellers drank the foaming milk and gratefully munched home-made bread and freshly churned butter.

D. G. Periwinkle-Brown was enchanted with everything he saw. It is true, the advance was somewhat retarded by his keen desire, to stop and sketch everything he saw; a stone fence, a hay-mow, a slough, all of which he termed "jolly odd you know," and enthusiastically declared his wish that "Awnt Toe could see the peculiar deloights of this amazin' plaice!" Dick gained considerable ground while the sketches (all decorously made and set up upon the easel quite properly) were finished, and he was waiting patiently for his fellow traveller as the night shadows fell; the horses, unharnessed, were feeding about the lawn, rich in grasses, now taking on the green of proemial summer.

Up drove the La-de-dah, enthusiastic over his latest sketch. Dick rose and began to take out the horses. He preferred doing it unaided rather than suffer bewilderment of brain trying to put the harness together after everything unhookable had been unhooked and irremediably mixed.

"Where's the tent pole?" asked Dick, unrolling the canvass, preparatory to pitching tent.

"Don't you think a little yacht on the wattaw before that cute little little *villa* would be an impovement?" The La-de-dah held up to view a log shanty glorified by the imagination.

"Where did you get that?" asked Dick, beginning to smile.

"Oh! it's that rathaw pwetty little plaice we lunched at, you know—only," the artist heitated, "only I—touched it up a little you see; what do you think about a—a yacht, Workman? It would impwove it, eh?"

"I think myself that a pump would be more appropriate," laughed Dick, adding in an anxious way, "Where's the tent pole? let's get this thing up—I want some supper."

The search for the tent-pole was ineffectual. Dick had himself lashed it to his companion's wagon and he felt that it ought to be there, though further search revealed nothing.

"The tent-pole," repeated Dick, coming over to where his companion was with great earnestness and wonderful nautical skill, placing a yacht upon a potato patch, "that long pole, you know—the stick the tent balances on——"

"Do you mean that little boa'd you fawstened to my—wagon, the one that kept gettin' among my wheels all day?"

"Y—es," answered Dick, his heart beginning to sink, "I—I suppose so."

"Why, the bloomin' thing got to be such a—a—nuisance, I—I threw it away, oh! evah so faw back; does it weally mattaw?"

Dick sat down and groaned. The dark clouds gathering in the north, he knew meant rain, and without the tent the discomforts of that night were assured.

"I say," said the La-dé-dah folding up his easel and putting his sketches carefully away when he became conscious of his error, "there's none to be bought anywhere about, is there?"

"No," said Dick shortly, "the only thing money won't buy in the Nor'-West is common sense."

Then he was sorry for his churlishness, and he got up a supper of bacon fried the color of crape, and set about making bannocks, rolling them out on the tail-board of his wagon, the La-de-dah looking on, and declaring he would "give no end of dollahs if Awnt Toe saw him eatin' such awful stuff!" and Dick pitied him from his soul.

That night they slept beneath one of the wagons; the tent thrown over the conveyance made a sort of shelter, but not completely comfortable, as the wind rose, and the flapping of the wet canvass made dismal dreariness of the sleepless hours.

It was useless to think of traveling; useless to attempt building a fire in that downpour; the morning was spent under the wagon lying upon the wet grass, and watching for any faint sign of fine weather; but the clouds frowned with heavy brows, and as the day advanced the thunder increased. Breakfast was a dismal failure notwithstanding the relishes. The impossibility of getting at the boxes for books, which D. G. Periwinkle-Brown had thoughtfully provided, but having forgotten which of the four trunks he had put them in, it was deemed rash to institute a search under the circumstances—added to the dreariness; the sketching enthusiasm too went out, and the silence, save for the champ-ing of the horses hobbled close by, was intense.

"We shall have lots of mosquitoes tomorrow" said Dick without looking up.

"Aw they very—vicious?" asked his companion, his mind bent on carnage upon the slightest provocation.

"I should say so," answered Dick laughing in a quarrelsome way.

"They've bills as long as a—tailor, and they bleed you just as badly as that rascal."

Whereupon the La-de-dah was roused into interest and he became greatly depressed to learn that the only clothing available out west was ready-made, and his hopes went down with a thud.

They dined off hannocks and slough water that day, and Dick felt truly sorry when he saw his companion turn away; not even Crosse and Blackwell's choicest could tempt him; "Purveyors to H. M." had no loyal effect upon his appetite. The La-de-dah could not eat.

Next morning the rain had ceased and a breeze rose up. After a hot breakfast of coffee—which they both heartily enjoyed—they were off. Considerable delay was occasioned by the La-de-dah insisting on securing his 'galoshes,' which, in anticipation of fine weather were packed at the bottom of the wagon, and the bacon, flour, dried-apples, guns, ammunition, etcetera were removed, they found the goloshes ambushed by the mackintosh. Both were taken out and everything replaced.

Forward they rode, D. G. Periwinkle-Brown silent and contemplative, enveloped in the folds of his rain-coat, his gleaming spurs sacrificed to the 'galoshes,' his hat drawn low, his head drooping, although subdued in outward demeanor, and inwardly cogitating on how to approach Dick, riding ahead and whistling cheerily, and explain to him that he had decided to give up the trip.

New difficulties were presented with every thought. 'Awnt Toe' had been advised to communicate with him at Prince Albert. He had ordered his mail forwarded to that point—the road back—*there was no road!* What if this stranger in whom he had trusted proved to be a robber? What if he led him to the den of Cacus? Visions rose before the mind's eye of this alarmed youth that caused his soul to shiver; he swam in sorrowful reflections out of which he was rudely jerked by a wheel striking a gopher hole larger and deeper in proportion than other holes; they were upon the treeless, trackless plain now, and what if Dick proved to be a robber and plundered him out here on the vast prairie?

However Dick behaved well and was seemingly so void of any blood-thirsty intentions that the Londoner felt returning confidence.

The sunshine was pleasant, and too, the mosquitoes helped to take his attention off minor matters, and (after a determined fight against it)

he at last consented to have his face smeared with tar to keep off those aggravating pests. Dick had presented such a sight that the La-de-dah declared he would stand the flies rather than disfigure himself so, but sleepless nights and added days of torture, together with the conviction that they would meet no one, gave Dick the satisfaction of applying the remedy, that was the only occasion on which the La-de-dah failed to observe he'd "give any amount of dollahs" to have "Awnt Toe" on hand. And Dick roared silent roars of laughter as he drove on.

To D. G. Periwinkle-Brown each succeeding day grew more monotonous. Dick was cheerful, his song and whistle rang out musical and clear as ever, but to the delicate London patrician, sleeping on the hard ground and moving steadily on, was monotonous in the extreme.

At times the wagons were mired in the sloughs, and it necessitated taking the two teams, attaching them in turn to each wagon and by dint of halloing, a vigorous application of the whip lash, and splashing through muddy water up to the armpits at times, they manage to advance. To the healthy young Canadian suitably clad, it meant discomfort merely, to the languishing London-nurtured young gentleman in fine shoes and finer vestments it meant misery doubled. They were now obliged to carry both fuel and fresh water, having reached the Great Salt Plains, an unhealthy barren stretch of white-encrusted earth whereon no spear of grass thrived. Betimes it showered and the ground became putty; anon blazing sunshine blistered the flesh, sometimes a flurry of snow surprised them, and the despondent declaration of the stranger was that it was "an awfully peculiar climate!" Dick averred we were supremely blest in not having to go abroad to seek a change of clime, it conveniently coming to us in all degrees.

But the last stroke fell when the matches—a supply in charge of Dick himself—fell *holus bolus* into one of the sloughs in one of the extraordinarily bad crossings, a wheel striking a bolder so disastrously as to fling Dick and the contents of the wagon into the slimy slough.

Dick shook himself dry, and picked up the damaged goods and effects, but this accident left him without means of making a fire, and the supper that night would have been a cold one, had it not been that a stray Indian struck the camp, furnishing them with a supply of this commodity, and astonished the Londoner by making no effort to scalp anybody. He rather patronized them.

It was the last night upon the Salt Plain. D. G. Periwinkle-Brown sat propped against a wagon wheel, Dick opposite to him and supported by a like background. It was after a long silence the La-de-dah, without looking at Dick, announced his determination to go back. He admitted having had enough of prairie life; he would go back to Wiunipeg. "You see, Workman, it is this way," he said, heaving a prodigious sigh, "I had no idea—it was—well! like—this; why, I've not had a—*a bawth* for—for ever so long! and Awnt Toe, oh! she nevah *dreamed* I should suffah like this!" And Dick distinctly observed two London-bred tears roll down the dejected face before him.

"Surely you aren't going to funk now," said Dick, bringing his fist down on a giant mosquito boring for blood.

"Well, you see—I—I—," stammered the unhappy traveller, shifting one hard spot for another, "I'm Awnt Toe's heir you understand, and—I feel as if—as if I ought not to endangaw me loise! I think I must go back."

Dick made no answer; it turned him sick to see this aristocrat, his noddle steeped with the classics, his knowledge of arts and sciences, as given by college cramming, his airs and arrogance, and nowhere an ounce of self-reliant manhood. Dick pitied him too; he looked so forlorn, his collar limp, his corduroys bedraggled, his fine boots destr—
Ah! In a flash came the conviction and Dick understood: *The La-de-dah was suffering from tight boots!*

Without apology Dick proceeded to kick off his own stout shoes with a cheery "Here goes for another night tenting on the cold damp ground. Off with your boots, man," said he, spreading out his blankets, "and you'll be ripe for a move on to-morrow when the clouds roll by!" And Dick made a feint of rolling himself into a ball, like a wary spider watching an unsuspecting fly.

The night had fallen, and something like a sob came to Dick's ears; Aunt Toe's heir was seeing visions he knew, then, being weary, he dozed off and, of course, fell a-dreaming of pretty Sally Loftus.

Out of the mystery of night came a rumble and roar; the La-de-dah sat up, his heart banging against his ribs in the belief that a horde of savages were coming down to scalp the just and the unjust alike. Nearer and louder it grew, suddenly coming to a halt with a tremendous "Wh—o—o—a—," sending a reverberating 'o—a—over the sea-like green.

"Wha—t—d—o you think it—is?" queried D. G. Periwinkle, his hand on a pistol, promptly prepared to sell his scalp dearly.

"Settlers!" announced Dick peering under the tent flap, "freighters I guess, let's go to sleep again." And then he heard a moan of pain and he remembered.

"Take off your boots man, and have a sleep," urged Dick.

"I—I'm afraid I—cawn't get them—on again—if I do," owned this scion of the nobility.

"Give us a leg," said Dick curtly, and getting into the position of an animated boot-jack, he tugged stontly until by repeated efforts the boots came off with such a sudden willingness that it sent him sprawling. Dick could have cried then when he saw the state of the poor fellow's feet. The flesh was inflamed and ridges of purple showed that he had indeed suffered; blisters as big as a penny embroidered the palms of his feet, evidence of endurance as Dick thought to himself, which showed he was all right at bottom.

"Why in—putney," exclaimed the Canadian, "didn't you tell me before?"

"I—I," stammered the simple fellow, "I thought everybody had to be—un—comfortable, and—" here he almost broke down, "I wasn't going to—to—show the white fethaw while you stood it!"

Dick inwardly admired the sentiment, though he only said: "Pooh! my shoes fit me all right, yours don't, nine into seven won't go—out west." Then they both turned in and slept soundly.

Sunrise on the western prairie emerges from night's mantle with no lingering soft melting glow; great shafts of bronze roll back the dark curtains; the eyelids of dawn lift swiftly and with a mighty gush Day is born.

While Dick was stretching himself and giving a terrific 'yawp,' his companion's eyes opened with a startled expression.

"Time we were off," Workman said, "there's no bread you know and we can't go on without making some; we will draw lots to see which of us will be cook."

The Londoner made an effort to follow Dick's move in rolling out, but he collapsed with a groan.

"What's wrong?" and Dick gave the canvas a flop, throwing open one side of the improvised shelter and exposing to view an expanse rad-

lant as far as eye could see, upon blade and leaf dew-gems sparkled and seemed to sing, so brightly they shimmered under the dazzling sun. Wild birds signalled across the lawn and over the broad bosom of nature came perfumed breaths from budding stems.

Dick had crawled into the outer air, and a discordant snort, half fear, half annoyance, made Aunt Toe's heir peep out where a pair of legs showed the owner to be standing. He was sweeping the far-reaching distance, his fists twisted into a telescope, and breathing awful words that dare not be here chronicled.

"Horses are gone!" he said stooping to peer under the wagon, there's nothing for us now but to get after them as fast as we can; they have gone against the wind, I dare say," and Dick put up a hand, detecting in this way a faint indication that their search would be south.

"You must go due south," said Dick, eyeing that quarter critically, I'll make a *detour* and come across you I dare say, but if you find them, just fire off a——"

A pitiful sigh was wafted out from beneath the wagon, followed by the weak announcement: "I—I cawn't get—my—boots on!"

"Whew!" whistled Dick, smiling in spite of himself, "of course you can't walk, I forgot; well then, I'll go after the horses," slipping a halter over each shoulder and adding, "I know you can't get about very lively, but perhaps you can build us up a bannock for breakfast—I'll bring the flour and stuff to you, and see here Brown!" taking a memorandum from an inner pocket, "here's a receipt for making them; a dashed nice little girl in Barrie gave me this; listen sharp now, here's what you've got to do: put all the stuff mentioned here in this pan, mix 'em up jolly well, and when they're ship-shape, smooth it all out on the wagon board, d'ye understand?"

"I—I guess so," said the La-de-dah, glancing at the paper, "there is flowah, and buttah—I say Workman, its an awfully pretty hand don't you know, I say now, was it a certain little laidy that gave you this?"

"You'd better bind up your feet," said Dick moving away, the halter lines trailing the grass, and his eyes inquiringly fixed on a white tent pitched some distance away, from it's apex curling smoke wreathing a cloud halo.

"Wonder who it is?" he thought, passing on. Meantime the La-de-dah, after much travail had secured from a satchel a fine linen shirt and several handsome silk handkerchiefs; the shirt he bound around

one foot, and the other he masked in the silken squares; thus ambushed the blisters found relief, and this young man in this remarkable guise set about his new duty, referring many times to the memorandum, which, for convenience, he pinned to one knee, repeating over and over:

"Two qua'ts of sifted flowah." Was this *sifted* flowah, or simply flowah only?

"Two eggs, well beaten," blank dismay; the eggs which he had ordered were in that unlucky slough far far back! No eggs being available he doubled the allowance of flour registered, thereby filling the omission. "A little salt," in went a chunk the size of an egg.

"Two heaping teaspoons of B. powder," well, he had the powdah if he hadn't the eggs—so he prudently measured the quantity from his silver powder horn with great exactness; this he dumped into the flour, and on consulting the paper again, found he had forgotten the butter. When the butter was added new preplexities arose; the lumps refused to join friendly relations with the flour; the powder behaved badly, and looked worse, and while the distressed young man struggled with the mess, sitting squat upon the ground, the pan upon his knees, every evolution of the big iron spoon making a new tear in Dick's cherished reminder of the "dashed nice little girl," while, I say, the decision of this distracted young man poised between facing starvation and Dick, beaten, or persevering in this herculean task, a rippling laugh just over his shoulder caused the spoon to send a shower of the ingredients right into the face of the La-de-dah, the pan clutched in both hands, his horrified eyes transfixed by a pair of blue orbs, and above him appeared a vision, hovering in pink clouds it seemed, and smiling down upon him. He was perfectly conscious of the fact that he was an awful sight. He knew his feet were objects of irresistable humor, he was aware his face was disguised by the tar, but until he made a shivering effort to take off his hat to this pink divinity, never did he discover that his night cap was still upon his head.

"I've been watching you for ever so long!" she said, seating herself upon the grass and peering into the pan in the most friendly manner imaginable.

Seeing that the lady's attention might by this means be drawn from his swaddled extremities, the unhappy young man began to stir the contents of the pan vigorously.

"What are you doing?" inquired the prairie nymph, "and what are those queer little black specks?"

"I'm making—er—I—er—I really forget the name," he stammered apologetically, "but you eat them—when you're *awfully hungry*." Here a small pink finger rashly ventured into the briskly revolving stuff, and picking out a black speck looked at it critically.

"Oh! that's the powdah," explained this embryo *chef*, glad to be able to say something familiar on the subject.

"Oh! I thought it was spice," said the young lady, casting a doubtful glance at the compounder, who, fearing her attention might be withdrawn and become directed to other and more horrible things, with professional gravity eyed the mixture and said: "I think I'll—add a little—more powdah!"

The pink apparition shrieked with dismay, seeing the powder horn brought into play in this way, and promptly from the tent beyond, came the startling and lusty demand:—

"Arrah, Mollie gurrl, fwat are 'ou scramin' fer?" and over the grass waddled a buxom matronly body, her full round face brimful of good nature; two powerful arms akimbo, and deep inquiry in her honest eyes.

"O, mamma!" exclaimed the pink divinity, "come here! Just think, this gentleman is putting powder—gun powder you know, into his bannocks!"

"Glory be t' God!" ejaculated the stout lady coming to a horrified stand and eyeing the 'gentleman,' who at that moment had received a terrible shock—discovering the prairie nymph in all her dainty sweetness to be the daughter of this "extremely vulgah looking pehson," as he was thinking.

"Poor bye!" says that lady, eyeing D. G. Periwinkle-Brown severely but kindly, "wisha me poor sowl, but what's the matther wid yer toes?" The La-de-hah had scrambled to his feet having, with delight, observed Dick in the distance, and at an exclamation from the pretty daughter, who had disappeared and was now returning with a huge loaf of bread, the elder lady said:—

"Shure here's O'Toole comin' now; an' faix if he ain't—it is too be me sowl! Mollie, me gur'rl, here comes yer father an' Dick Workman along wid him!"

A fine stout military looking man was approaching with Dick, both leading horses.

"Hello ! hello ! Mrs. Major !" shouted Dick, dropping the bridle to extend both hands ; "and so this is little Mollie, eh ? Well, well ! who'd ever expect to run across you out here ?"

"Och, shure 'twas lost entirely we was, Mистер Dick, shure me moind wasn't aisy at all, at all, an' Mollie away ; so wan day after you wint yersilf, Mистер Dick, the Major tackled up, an' sez he : It's after Mollie I'm goin' says he. Shure larnin's all right an' well enough Mистер Dick, but I got on widout anny myself ; so across the plains says I, me gurrl won't come alone, says I, so shure enough 'twas after Mollie we wint."

"Well, well !" said Dick, placing an audacious arm about Mollie's pink waist in the most brotherly way, "Why Mollie ! you're so grown up and so pretty I'd never know you !"

"Och ! shure but it's a dale she has larned in thim four years Mистер Dick, didn't she O'Toole ?" turning to the Major, who it would appear only spoke when appealed to ; "Shure 'tis the melotherum she kin make music out av' wid her two hands to wanst ! And Frinch ! an' dhrawin' on paper wid a pin ! O ! faix 'tis wondherful !"

"Let me introduce to you my friend, Mr. Periwinkle-Brown, a new settler for the Flat," breaks in Dick. "This is my nearest neighbor, Major O'Toole, Mrs. O'Toole, and Miss Mollie O'Toole, Brown," says Dick.

"I believe I saved your life Mr. Dick," laughed Mollie shyly, casting an arch glance at the Londoner, who was talking to the Major on one side, and with much laughter the story of the bannocks came out ; and it was decided they should all breakfast together, Mrs. Major waddling off to prepare the same. The rest of the journey would be traveled in company with the Major, and there was no further hint of returning from the La-de-dah.

It proved as we have seen that Major O'Toole, and Mrs. Major—as she was called by her friends — were, when at home, Dick's own neighbours. The Major who still held a commission in H. M. service, had came out from Ireland and having found his way out west where he was now his own landlord and owned a fife stretch of ground that covered as much space as Conemara itself.

Mollie was the only child and when the Major, in the new land he now called his home, saw no opportunity of giving his daughter a complete education, it was decided to take her back to Winnipeg which boasted educational advantages equal to eastern and much older cities. At St. Mary's Academy it was that little Mollie, then a slip of a girl in short frocks was taken, her tongue still clinging to the sweet accent of her native isle. How she improved the four years under the care and training of the amiable sisters of St. Mary's was now shown in her easy manner, her bright smile and polished conversation. And what a pleasant meeting it was! Indeed it was to Mrs. Major's kind ministrations and good nursing Dick owed his life, for the Red River fever that lurks among the prairie hollows and picks out for its victims pilgrims and strangers, caught him in the early days and he never forgot the motherly body, who, fretting for Mollie, in the heart-hunger gave to Dick some of that wasting affection.

It was quite evident that Major O'Toole was, mentally speaking, the superior of his wife and it was equally observable from start to finish that Mrs. Major was the man of the house. It was Mrs. Major who gave the order to 'move on' while her motherly eye—full of sympathy for "the poor bye" as she called the Londoner limping painfully about—thought deeply of some means of relief to his sufferings.

"'Tis O'Toole's shoes I'll be afther gettin' him" she said to Dick and regardless of his objections the La-de-dah forthwith was standing in a pair of the Major's stout shoes, which to his surprise acted like a charm—*memo*: they were big enough.

"Thim harses wint aff in the night and O'Toole wint afther thim be the first sthreak av' day thinkin' he could ketch a houl't av' thim widout anny thrubble at all; faix if he had, 'tis aff we'd have been; shure 'tis a bad wind blows no wan good, an' no mistake! The gosoon there naded O'Tooles' shoes, an' faix he's welkim t' thim same."

Dick heard no more about 'Awnt Toe' or indeed about turning back; Mollie's blue-grey Irish eyes lit up the whole world now, and, let us not be ungrateful—the Major's shoes were an excellent fit.

D. G. Periwinkle-Brown had become quite a pioneer, he had overcome his repugnance to dining off a tin plate, and had achieved some dexterity in the use of a three-pronged fork; he had lately omitted to offer "any amount of dollahs" for a "glawss of beah," and if he wish-

ed for "Awnt Toe" to be one of the party on "this beastly twip you know" he never so stated.

Mrs. Major in a buxom way that was all her own and not at all offensive made herself the central figure, thereby robbing the La-de-dah of any opportunity for self-consideration.

"Luk at thim two craythers now," she would say winking at the Major and casting a pleased glance at Mollie perched upon the high wagon sent beside the La-de-dah sorting early wild flowers, unconscious that the dumb language was creeping creeping into the hearts of both and weaving life's wondrous story; "musha 'tis tachin' the poor bye she be's, shure 'tis thankful t' God we shud be t' know annything at all at all, not like thim poor craythurs."

The Major trudged along contentedly, allowing Mrs. Major to boss matters. The Major might have made a *mesalliance* according to social ideas, but whatever the Major's wife lacked in elegance of diction she more than compensated for in wisely devotion.

"Shure 'tis the divil a wan I'd be folleyin' across the say frum God's own green Isle, on'y O'Toole himself!" she would say to Dick, adding with a sigh: "but a sojer's wife have no right t' be complainen' — God knows 'tis not complainen' I am, but plaze the saints 'tis back t' the owld sod we'll be goin' this day twel' month."

The trip was now a delightful holiday. At Batoche where they made a crossing it was Gabriel Dumont who ferried them over, the same bronzed and shaggy-maned old-timer who afterwards caused the country considerable trouble, and poor Mrs. O'Toole much ——— but why introduce sad memories here? They creep in soon enough, alas!

Let us stand upon the bank of the great Saskatchewan, thundering down over rocks that jut out and madly try to stay the mad tide; between the trees that line the opposite bank snow wreaths still cling to shady places; beyond, where the sun shines, purple crocuses dot the billowy green, and here and there May blossoms, cheated by the sunshine into believing the 'merry month' had come, shyly lifted their heads, and save for the roar of the rushing river, above all the silence that 'prisons thought.

Before the last day of the jorney, D. G. Periwinkle-Brown had announced his intention of "taking up a jolly fawm you know," it would be "so jolly odd you know, to watch the cunnin' little seeds of

grain growin'!" He asked a great many questions and listened delightedly to the stories of thirty bushels to the acre and learning from the Major's wife that butter sold at 60 cents per pound enthusiastically declared he would go in exclusively to the "raising of buttah!" He made a note of every article considered necessary to start farming, and at Goshen, while Dick and the Major were engaged in unpacking and pitching their tents, the Londoner wandered off and became the possessor of an outfit that included a gross of spades and a threshing machine—the latter a bargain—at eleven hundred dollars!

The Major and Dick tried to caution this young man after the manner of men who had been caught in some of those same transactions; they neglected their own spring work and drove out in many directions spying out land for the stranger; a selection was made of a choice bit of land, well wooded, and lying just along the bank of the river, "admirably suited," the La-de-dah admitted "for sketchin'"; he accordingly decided upon this selection, drove his stake, tying a silk handkerchief to it for future identification and the entry was duly made at the land office, where, learning with incredulity that he was free to take three hundred and twenty acres for the "rank" sum of twenty dollars! thereupon he declared the land must be no good! it was too cheap! He wanted something "bettah"! Then he made new explorations and losing the guidance and good sense of his friend's advice—they being busied in seeding operations—he fell in with the Philistines: One Brooky who had an eye to the main chance, and sometimes gave newcomers the benefit of his advice, (which was costly on occasions) Brooky undertook to prove to the La-de-dah that an improved farm was the thing; Brooky had just such a one as would suit; upon this farm there were "evidences of coal"; the water below the stables "*was oily*"! Brooky looked over each shoulder with great caution, and confidentially pointed to a bit of shining rock that glistened in the sunlight; there was tremendous meaning in Brooky's eye; the wink that followed expressed a mine of information. D. G. Periwinkle-Brown became the possessor of Brooky's farm; the late owner himself being engaged as manager, and the whole estate—as the proud owner now called it—was put under crop forthwith. A small army of help was secured and improvements commenced at once. Parks were fenced in, lawns were laid out, *boulevärdes* were built, and nature's plan so remodeled that one day when the Major and Dick rode over they paused in astonishment. The Major was aghast at this extra

vagant beginning ; but there was no use remonstrating with this would-be gentleman farmer, who rode round his estate attired in fine linen and fashionable attire. He imported fruit trees and had the same set out under the direction of a landscape gardener. In front of the house a deep hollow was scooped out at immense labour, and an apparatus set up whereby water from the river was pumped up and a lake induced there, but the water was doggedly determined on finding its own level and the apparatus proved a failure after repeated trials, and the La-de-dah had to content himself with making sketches of the arrangement and sending them to 'Awnt Toe' with glowing accounts of his successes.

Dick looked on and shook his head, but when a young gentleman with prospects has nothing to do but cable across the water for two hundred pounds, six hundred pounds, ten hundred pounds, and it is duly dropped in his palm, *que voulez vous ?*

All this time of magnificent undertaking and successful squandering the La-de-dah was a shining light in the social world of Goshen. His Lordship, in his carriage and pair, stopped at the great gate (which was attended by no less than a *bona-fide* gatekeeper) and the echo of Episcopal wheels for the first time was heard upon Lower Flat trails, and as one fly always brings another, all the way from Lawrence Hall, at Carleton, came cards for social functions. These demands took a great deal of the time it will be understood, but Brooky managed so well that all that seemed necessary at all for the owner of the estate to do was to sign certain scraps of paper, that may have meant much, but was certainly very little trouble.

Archdeacon Goode secured the Londoner's interest in mullioned windows for the new church ; the windows were forthwith ordered, and a fine organ besides—"the gift of a Christian brother,"—as was stated modestly from the pulpit—a canonical eye seeking out that "Christian brother," who occupied a good pew upholstered in good silk, and resting there with appreciable benignity.

Need it be related how the La-de-dah became the prey of pecking crows in human shape ? and how through all the effervescing adulation he remained the same to his first-made friends, refusing dinners to which the Major and Dick were not invited ; sending his "regrets" to social functions unless Dick and Dick's neighbors were accepted guests ; and as the Londoner, always faultlessly dressed, was necessary to the success of such affairs, it came about that cards were received in general in

Lower Flat for a *fete* at His Lordship's the Bishop ; and Mollie, trembling with excitement and looking like a little flower under the shadow of a lilac bush in full bloom—for Mrs. Major was there in her wedding dress of lilac-colored Irish poplin made twenty odd years before—and the Major, albeit his wedding suit was made for a more slender figure, looked every inch the officer and gentleman on that never-to-be-forgotten night.

Naturally, the invitations included the dignitaries of His Lordship's fold ; the wool of the secular world still clung to many of the sheep therein numbered ; the reverend Sibley fell under the influence of that " which stingeth like an adder when looked upon in the red." Mrs. Sibley, who was the direct descendant of a Piegan chief, wore a clean white apron—it being a dress occasion, and Deacon Downer, a full-blooded Cree, and a zealous missionary for over twenty years, brought in tow his good wife, whose only ornamentation (beyond a necktie of green mosquito netting) was a row of wolf's teeth about her shoulders, this, although her appearance was drooping in the extreme, made her seem what the Lah-de-dah styled, " a most savage old pawty." Among the guests came a chief factor from some remote post of the Hudson's Bay Company's preserves, and upon his arm his good wife, gorgeous in a purple silk gown, its glory being somewhat eclipsed by several rows of red worsted braid trimming the skirt, while the bodice was more gorgeously ornamented with muskrat tails, which in the Red River jig, gave the good soul the appearance of a feminine version of The Pied Piper as she *dos-à-do'd* across the set. The only thing that marred the proceedings happened when the guests were being announced, and Dobbs, who acted as footman on the occasion, announcing a portly trader from the far north, as " Mr. Dewiggle Diggs."

" Dewiggle Diggs," shouted Dobbs, his face as immovable as a beef-eater.

" Well, what d'ye want?" demanded that gentleman, turning from His Lordship's outstretched hand to bend on Dobbs a look of irate inquiry.

But this little pleasantry did not detract from the delights of that evening. His Lordship dispensed hospitality like the thorough gentleman of the old school which he undoubtedly was ; using great tact in keeping the native ladies from squatting upon the floor after the fashion of their training, by actively moving about, offering here an arm, there a chair and altogether adding to his popularity by his innate good breeding and courtesy.

Mollie behaved so prettily that D. G. Periwinkle-Brown was hopelessly enchained forever. During the evening, and after she had sung "Killarney" sweetly but timidly, playing a piano accompaniment while Mrs. Major beat time with both feet quite correctly, and the Major, blowing his nose violently to cover the tears that crept from somewhere moved away because the notes bird-like and heart touching stirred the Irish soul of him.

"Angels fold their wings and rest

In that Island of the west"—sang sweet Mollie.

It was no use, Mrs. Major cried then and there and she wasn't ashamed of it either and she said so, and Mollie blushing at her own daring in attempting to sing before so many people was borne off from the crowd upon the arm of a super-elegant young man, who, on the veranda, among other foolish declarations, at one word announced that his estate heretofore known to the whole country as "Brittania Manor," should henceforth be called—Killarney!

So you see that although Troy was lost through a woman, "Brittania Manor" was captured by another.

The La-de-dah made a fine settler. He had already spent six thousand pounds and he was promisingly in debt. His first crop had been a failure, but that was an accident. He was late in seeding, and the harvest was delayed, and several things combined to make things unsuccessful. There was smut in the seed he bought, and 'mustard' was thicker than the grain, and a market was out of the question; however Aunt Toe answered the demands magnificently, and she had moreover sent him out some boxes. The freight charges on them was heavy it is true, but the contents were well worth the expenditure.

There were curtains of finest lace, tapestry hangings for *portières* (a term somewhat puzzling to Lower Flat); paintings of family greatness, chiefly appearing in High Chancellor robes or three cornered hats of the Lord Mayor pattern; these Mrs. Major took to be "play actors," and Dick had to use great caution in explaining aloud each honorable official to avoid outspoken mistakes. Axminster rugs and cushions of rare silken stuffs; a candelabra of silver, and bits of rare china for the dining room.

Mrs. Major saw and kept silent, but going home she observed with astute reasoning backed by an unassailable belief "I'll go bail 'tis a pawnshop the owid Ant be's kapin'; musha, how ilse cud she get thim quare foldherols?"

All this grandeur at "Killarney" was the cause of pleasant time-passing by the owner. He gave evening parties, borrowing the Major's wife who acted as chaperon to the young people, and jolly were the impromptu dances in the large rooms with their modern art decorations; and there too were caps set for a certain well-to-do gentleman who was polite to all, but devoted to one only. Sometimes during the winter evenings they gathered around the big square stove in the Major's big log shanty, and occasionally danced to the music of Bob McHeath's fiddle; and Mrs. Major was the merriest one there, for the crop had paid well, and in the market her own butter always brought five cents a pound above all other butter, and the trip back to the 'owld sod' seemed a blessed reality and almost in view.

The spring came round again and with it the work and anxieties belonging to farm life. The La-de-dah was not satisfied with having three hundred acres cropped; he rented the adjoining place, and put extra hands on, and what a prospect it was! Five hundred acres of yellow grain nodding tipsily in the August sun, drunk in its own wine! The prospect was great.

The Major had fields that smiled with promise; Dick saw Sally Loftus sitting about among the rich wheat, and his calculations for an addition to his shanty took solid form now; nevertheless, like the Major, he watched the weather.

The reapers were being brought out from last year's shelter; great bakings went on at the various farm houses, the grain was ripe, almost ready for the knife, and the big arms of the reaper would soon be beating the air to the driver's tune, while the luscious sheaves, coin in themselves, would cumber the fields with riches.

The Major was standing by the gate watching the cows pass in one by one to where Mollie, a bright pail in each hand, stood, waiting for Speckled Beauty and Blinky, her own especial care; Mrs. Major, her stout arms akimbo and bearing a couple of milking pails, was coming from the direction of the dairy.

"I belave" said the Major, shutting the gate slowly and looking overhead with misgiving glance "there's frost threatenin' wife!"

"'Tis that same thing was in me own mind O'Toole" answered that lady in a troubled tone, adding, as her eye swept the sea of standing grain, "ye'll find the poor bye worried — shure if he lose his crop again 'twill be ruination; I hear Pindher sayin' wan day that barrin' the crop

the gosoon have nawthin' at all, at all. He's a dacent bye, on'y a bit spiled be his anceatliers."

"I'll go over and warn him annyway" said the good man slipping his pipe into a pocket, and stepping out in the direction of "Killarney."

"Frost!" The La-de-dah laughed heartily; "frost in August!" Who evah hea'd of such a preposterous absurdity? Why, the day had been so warm Brooky was quite indisposed; but if the Majaw, who really was awfully kind, advised, why, to morrow — if Brooky was bettah and approved"—why he would proceed to cut forthwith.

That night the frost fell, swiftly, silently. The morning sun rose on four hundred acres of blighted grain; black, dwarfed—ruined. Brooky swore and swore roundly that he never knew of an early frost in all his experience before. But words were of no avail. The crop was a teetotal loss and D. G. Periwinkle-Brown was a beggar.

Face to face with this overwhelming difficulty the Lah-de-dah from London paused by his blighted acres, paused and thought. His entire crop gone; the "improvements" in bills and costs weighing like lead on his troubled mind; his bank account badly on the wrong side, and, but one hope now left: another call on Aunt Toe.

To his credit be it understood, he did not lift up his voice and *cuss* the country; nor did he denounce that convenient scapegoat for disappointed speculators, the government! He did not blame the latitude nor rail at Providence; none of these things did the Lah-de-dah—he simply stood by his blighted and blackened acres and thought.

The Major had saved his crop by laboring all night, keeping up smudges, ably assisted by his good wife, who, as she said, scorned the idea of "slaping comfortably in me feather bed whin O'Toole was thrubbled;" that good woman stirred up the smoky turf, bearing tufts of sod to add to the smothered fires laid along the fence line, the thick canopy of smoke acting as a shield over the grain, keeping off that fell enemy to prairie fields, early frost. Dick had secured his material wealth by putting on extra hands, and working himself like a serf, providing the standing grain with the same protection as the good Major; and here was our friend, the Lah-de-dah, otherwise D. G. Periwinkle-Brown, late of London, England, and gentleman-farmer, surveying his ruined prospects and beginning to feel that his ideas, together with his hopes, were bankrupt with his credit; acknowledging, with some inward stabs—self-inflicted—

that by taking the Major's advice he could have avoided this last and crowning disaster.

All at once he became conscious of some undefinable breath of contentment, something like balm stole over his senses, and he turned to find a pair of blue-grey Irish eyes looking up at him, and misty with the heart's dew, tears.

"Why, Mollie!" he exclaimed, taking off his cap and smiling down on her, "I'm contemplating my failyahs you see; trying to figuah myself out of this — hole;" he swept one arm in the direction of the blackened acres.

"Ma sent me over, Mr. Periwinkle-Brown, to ask you to — come to — supper; Mr. Binning brought all our mail up too, and there are some — letters — Mr. Dick says"—pretty Mollie's voice began to waver, she could keep the tears back no longer—"I'm so sor—I mean we are all so sorry." Then little Mollie began to cry, like the tender-hearted soul she was, and right there, out upon the open plain in full view of the trail and above his blighted possessions, the La-de-dah took Mollie into his arms and told her that he loved her. Men are such oddly constructed beings, that, finding themselves in one difficulty floundering, they blindly plunge into a greater.

Now, Mollie O'Toole was a properly trained young woman. She immediately wriggled herself out of the awkward position of being caged in the arms of a handsome young man—in broad day. She moreover, knew that D. G. Periwinkle-Brown was a *gentleman*. She understood the relative positions of the descendant of conquering kings and the heir to Aunt Toe's millions, and the daughter of a plain settler out west; so that, when La-da-dah, surrounded by his losses, borne down by his crosses, and contemplating nothing but disaster (why should he not make the final plunge and drag somebody down with him? misery, especially male misery, likes company) proposed to pretty Mollie and was *refused*! It knocked D. G. Periwinkle-Brown, descendant of conquering kings and "busted" *gentleman-farmer*, out. The vulgar frost might be blind to his value as a "gentleman settler;" fate might treat him as it would any ordinary person, but to be refused by a bread-and-butter-Miss out on the prairies of the unenlightened Territories, it knocked D. G. Periwinkle-Brown out!

He stared at Mollie, gasped once or twice, then asked "whethaw" she "undahstood" that he "weally meant that he would marry her?"

and Mollie, blushing and crying at once, shook her pretty head while she dug wells in the sod with an agitated toe, and said she "never, never, never, could think of such a thing;" and then, for fear she must cry out that she loved him, loved him the more because of his losses, she turned like a mad thing and ran down the trail, leaving the La-de-dah standing there as if thunderstruck.

"It is not often a well-to-do young man with prospects, sees a pretty girl, especially a poor one, running *from* him, and the La-de-dah lost none of the peculiar effect. Pretty Mollie, her black hair floating out, her small feet seeming scarcely to touch the earth as she ran, her pink gown waving about her like rose leaves, passed from sight, and then it was that La-de-dah heaved a tremendous sigh of relief.

"Gad!" was his ejaculation, "whatevah would I have done if she had said—yas? Fawncy the little Kinajin *refusin' me!* Of course she knew I nevah meant it;—I—I believe I—rathaw did though; 'pon my wa'd its' a jolly shame! Of co'rse she—she nevah dreamed I—meant it! She *refused*, eh? Oh, well, I'll go back to Awnt Toe! This fawmin' is a bloomin' humbug anywh—"

"Farming is all right," broke in Dick, suddenly appearing and bringing a strong hand down upon the La-de-dah's shoulder, "it's trying to farm *without farming* that is the trouble!"

"Now, I say, Workman!" stammered the young man, "haven't I—I spent evah so much? Haven't I done"—

"You've spent a deal too much and done nothing," said Dick determinedly. "Look at all that flummery," pointing to the pumping apparatus which loomed up a monument to folly; look at that lawn! useless! look at that artificial lake! (there was nothing but the hollow)—"useless; look at the gravelled walks and arbours! useless! I tell you what it is Brown" (Dick always dropped the hyphen when he was in earnest) "if you want to succeed out West you've got to roll up your leeves and go at farming like a man!"

"Now, Workman, I—say; that's all right and I da' say quite correct, but you undahstawnd I am not—oh, well; you know me Awnt Toe"—

"Oh!" said Dick suddenly remembering something and plunging both hands into pockets, "I've got a letter for you, here it is; Binning brought it up, and yes, the Major—I mean Mrs. Major wants you to come down to supper."

D. G. Pertwinkle-Brown was making a slit in the large envelope with a handsome pearl-handled pen-knife as he said :—" See heah Workman, I'm goin' to cut the whole bloomin' thing ; sawmin' may be all right you know, I don't say it isn't, you know, but I sawncy it requiahs — well, it requiahs a special sawt of — er — of education, you know ; I've decided to cut the whole thing ; I'll cable Awnt Toe for funds to squayah up this affayah, and I'll go "—

" What's wrong ? " shouted Dick. The Londoner suddenly ceased speaking, his eyes widened, his jaw dropped, his hands clenched the page of a letter with trembling grasp. He grew pale, turned ashen in color, then with a gasp of terror tumbled against the fence like one stricken.

" God bless me, man ! " said Dick, bending over, " have you got bad news ? " It was a helpless pitiful glance that turned to Dick ; the La-de-dah laid trembling hands upon the top rail of the supporting fence, beads of sweat came out upon his forehead, his cheeks seemed to hollow with the pallor there, his eyes were fixed on Dick's as if craving sympathy, and he moaned : "*Me Awnt — Toe is — is — going to be — married !*"

Dick burst out laughing so sudden was the revulsion of feeling. He had imagined for one awful moment that Aunt Toe had gone the way of the Conqueror as well as all ordinary flesh ; " Married ! " shouted Dick, smacking his leg and roaring out a hearty guffaw that seemed to jar his woebegone companion painfully indeed — " Married ! " Dick rocked himself upon heel and toe in the most reckless fashion out of sheer excess of humor. " Then Brown, " he shouted, " your cake is dough old boy ! now you'll succeed in spite of yourself ! "

Dick went back to the Major's without the La-de-dah, who remained hanging over the fence, bathed in mental mourning, bemoaning his troubles, by this crowning grief intensified. Dick told all the wonderful news, making Mollie gasp a little and turn dizzy ; but she suddenly remembered that the chickens wanted feeding and she went away hastily. The Major said nothing, but smoked thoughtfully, relying on his good wife to express the family opinion, which she did after cautiously looking around the apartment, by solemnly saying. " thim poor craythers av' Englishers, shure they has no sinse at all at all. "

After this, the La-de-dah did not appear at the Major's attired in smart riding breeches, as was his wont. He rode by sometimes, when

Mollie and her mother were milking but he would merely touch his cap with his gold-tipped riding whip, and it always so happened that Speckle-Beauty would switch her tail (scornfully maybe) in Mollie's face, causing the tears to gather, and Mrs. O'Toole would whisper across:

"The poor bye, 'tis thrubbled he be's lookin', I wondher if he have plinty t' ate?" And Speckle-Beauty would behave as I have said, only worse than ever.

One evening Dick came strolling along, and sat down to have a smoke with the Major, outside the door; near by sat Mollie mending a stout pair of woollen socks, and with the help of her active ears became aware that Jewery, who accomodated people with loans at 28 per cent., and who had been particularly agreeable in this sense to the La-de-dah, had attached all the lands, machinery, cattle, horses and chattels, including the lawns and artificial lakes upon which so much had been squandered that D. G. Periwinkle-Brown had that very day been served with all sorts of obnoxious papers by the ungodly, but determined sheriff; that Brooky was pressing certain claims for back-pay as manager of the estate, in short, the uncomfortable fact remained that D. G. Periwinkle-Brown was, in Nor'-West parlance, "in the soup!"

The Major was deeply sorry for this very foolish young man, and Mollie stayed close by and held her breath while he said so, but when Mrs. Major took up the unpleasant argument, saying, "Shure how cud the gossoon thrive at all at all, whin a man slapes in his comfortable bed untill tin o'clock in the day, an' be the same token depindin' on a charachther like wan Brooky fer t' be doin' his juties, shure how cud he thrive? Faix dhressin' up in foine clo's an' ridin' about the counthry wasn't far-rmin' in anny sinse av' the wor-rd; an' whin' a gossoon wore foine cloth instead av' sinsible overalls an' a flannin' shurt, goin' bor-ryin' av' a jew at 28 per ciint, shure how cud—", but little Mollie was off up to her small room under the log eaves, her face close pressed into a pillow, sobbing and shivering; then she crept into bed, saying over and over again: "Oh! why—(sob) why—did (sob) n't—(sob) I—say y—(sob)—y—es?"

Our friend, the La-de-dah, being now "served" out of house and home, took up his residence with Dick. He did not answer his Aunt Toe's letter; he felt that he could not offer congratulations on what he considered a family affliction. His last hope was shattered.

The winter opened early and went on stormy and angry in temper ; the pleasant evenings at the Major's hospitable hearth were interrupted now, as Dick would not go and leave his companion alone, the Lah-de-dah refusing all social enjoyments ; his evenings were given to sitting before the blaze of a comforting chimney yawning warmth and home attractions, but therein the La-de-dah saw misery and broken longings only. He now began to see small errors in Mrs. Major's grammar which under sunnier aspects he had overlooked. Mollie was ever the same sweet flower-like thing, but her mother overcame much of that sweetness by what Dick insisted on calling her "naturalness" !

One day there was a hauling-bee at the Major's, in which the McHeaths, the Reeds, the McPaddens and other neighbours were taking neighbourly part—the hauling-bee being an industry in which pleasure and profit combine—Mrs. Major had set an excellent table, and there was Gray Nelson fingering the slender neck of his fiddle, twanging the most coaxing chords one could imagine, and the girls who had come in laughing and stamping off the snow, were in full readiness for the first call of "honors all" ! Dick himself led Mollie out and Mrs. Major was drumming the more bashful lads out of corners, "Come, Tom McPadden ! do yer juty now, there's Jocky behind ye waitin' fer ye t' take Christy there ; don't be hindherin' the bye ; faix, if I was young and good-lookin' meself 'tis not at aise me feet 'ud be !"

D. G. Periwinkle-Brown sat in a corner moodily watching the merry dancers, seeing pretty Mollie like a bird flitting here and there in the gay reel and almost wishing he had not come at all. Then he began to wish other things ; quite a contrary line of thought surged through his troubled mind, and was beginning to think he would ask Mollie for the next dance when his ears at that moment caught Bob McHeath's words : (Bob admired Mollie quite openly.)

"Well, Mrs. O'Toole, if I didn't know better I'd most believe Mollie had a beet-leaf in her pocket ; look at that for a bit of pink-an'-white complexion ! I never see the like !" Dick wanted to knock his inoffensive neighbor down then and there, and was on the point of calling him outside to inflict summary punishment of this nature when Mrs. Major's innocent rejoinder broke on his ear as she cast a look of profound admiration at Mollie : "Pink an' whoite is it ? Faix byas av' ye see her sthrippèd !" Dick went away more determined than ever to cut the whole thing.

With the long hard winter, things had come to a hopeless end for the La-de-dah. Jewery's claim had been satisfied according to Lower Flat law, and Brooky by way of satisfaction for his demands was possessor of "Killarney" once more. The oil fields had not come to anything; "evidences of coal" were still vague and the shiny rock still glistened innocently; and now Brooky turned his attention to other newcomers in search of *improved* farms. D. G. Periwinkle-Brown had come to his last dollar, not only that, but Black Beauty, that bore him gorgeous in white corduroys, so proudly over the hummocky prairie, his shining spurs and gold-tipped riding whip the envy of envious swains—Black Beauty too fell under the hammer of the remorseless Law; and one evening little Mollie seated by her small window saw returning from town afoot, the La-de-dah, his head drooping, his smart riding whip trailing the ground, "footsore and weary," as a romantic and sympathetic little heart thought—coming back *without Black Beauty!* The young man did not keep the trail which led by the Major's door, but made a *détour* going the old road, avoiding her, Mollie thought, while a big sob crushed gasping breaths, and a deal of sighing and a sad commotion was smothered up in the folds of Mollie's handkerchief and at that moment the Major leading "Star-eyes," Mollie's own horse, passed the window and took the turn towards the slough. With a bound she was down the crazy stairs, a sunbonnet drawn on in rakish but charming fashion and down the slope to where Star-eyes was luxuriously drinking. Mollie's lips were up to the Major's ear, where, without preliminary prayer a gasping, gurgling confession was poured therein, and the astonished old gentleman by way of benediction handed the bridle to his little girl, saying:—"God bless ye, my gurl, yes, yes!"

In a second she was on Star-eyes' back flying over the grass—oddly enough by the round-a-bout path too—and the curious stars began to peer with inquisitive blinks, when a lone figure upon the trail hearing a hurrying rider galloping down the road, stepped aside to let the traveler go by; but the pony stopped precisely at the spot where the lone figure was standing, and into that lone figure's eyes two Irish orbs lovingly, silently looked, while within his hands was pressed the rein of Star-eyes' bridle and pretty Mollie, having slipped to the ground, was sobbing:—

"I—wan—t—you—to—to—ha—ve—him—He's mine—I mean he's—yours—yours; oh, don't—don't say—n—no,—don't say—no,—oo!"

"You remember Mollie—darling, you said—*no*" somebody said very softly, and sadly; and just then, Star-eyes moved so perilously near that the La-de-dah had to place his arm—to guard Mollie of course—between that pink gown and Star-eyes' fuzzy coat, and by some chance Mollie got tangled up in the arm, or the reins, or both, and out of respect for a young man already in great tribulation and, as is usual, dangerously near to greater—the big blushing moon, who is feminine in feeling, I suppose—drew over her astonished face a cloud, and the gaping stars, ever inquisitive, were balked that time at least.

It wasn't ten minutes later when a very jaunty young man went back upon the same grass-grown way, a bridle flung over one arm, and the other—but never mind; his head was up, and such ringing laughter as went out over the billowy green! And a young lady, lately silent and subdued, was now chattering like a magpie, as they approached the gate where the Major, smoking an evening pipe comfortably, looked up to say:

"I'm glad ye tuk her me boy, she's a bit har-r-d in the bit at times, but a little coaxin' an' patience 'll keep her frum thricks, an' me boy" (taking the La-de-dah's hand in a friendly grasp) "she's yours an' welkim!"

"Yes—Major, I thank you from my heart—but I — don't think — we'll have any trouble—that way—shall we, Mollie?"

"God bless my soul!" ejaculated the Major, drawing himself up in an attitude that said "Present arms," "I — I meant the — baste." "And I meant—Mollie, sir!" was the answer.

That night the La-de-dah rode back to Dick's shanty poorer in wealth and richer in joy than I could tell; Dick was there, with an anxious face—Brooky had failed him in the promise of to-morrow's rail-hauling; to his astonishment D. G. Periwinkle-Brown immediately volunteered to take "the job." "You," says Dick with a laugh, "I thought you were going to cut the whole thing?"

"I was"—averts the La-de-dah stoutly, "but I've—decided to—cut gentleman fawmin."

And sure enough on the morrow the La-de-dah donned a pair of overalls, and went into work "with both hands," as Dick afterwards confided to the Major. Perhaps he didn't come out too strong on rail-hauling at first; and for some time he looked at his hands with rueful

glances, while Dick looked the other way, and coughed a terribly alarming cough; and occasionally—but not often—overslept himself on busy days, but Dick forgave much.

He learned to guide the plough and swear in a wonderfully short time; he managed the oxen old Buck and Bright so well that when he hollered "haw" when he meant "gee," and they obeyed instantly, and he said "I beg your pawdon," the dumfounded brutes stopped promptly; they were'nt used to it you see. Sometimes they took into their stupid heads that D. G. Periwinkle-Brown was tired following the furrow, and they would dash into the slough carrying the plow and the La-de-dah with them, but Dick was always ready to go to his assistance and haul him out again. He learned the cunning of the churn with its ceaseless dash-splash-dash, out of sheer gallantry, by offering to relieve Mrs. Major one day, and in return that lady said "Mollie must larn the goosoon t' milk the cows like a dacint bye;" and the La-de-dah did thereupon receive his first lesson seated close beside pretty Mollie, while the white stream made its milky way into the bright pails.

The La-de-dah seated upon the milking stool made brave efforts to overcome his repugnance to such things and only asked Mollie once, in hearing of her mother "I say,—how shawl I know when to stawp?" and Mrs. Major with a twinkle assured him "shure ye tur-rn aff a tap in her hor-rr-ns;" but the La-de-dah notwithstanding these little pleasantries found out how to milk, and when to stop too. Some of the fatalities attending his first efforts in the wheat field, when binding the sheaves ended disastrously, and he shocked the workmen instead of the grain; when he tumbled off the hay mow and very nearly impaled himself on the pitching fork; when his first effort in laundry work—after the manner of batching companions, was tried, by tying his clothes to the limb of a tree, and suffering the tide to act as purifier—the tide behaved strongly on such occasions and bore away the whole array, and the Lah-de-dah was reduced to accepting a share of Dick's once disdained wardrobe.

These things are told at Lower Flat yet, and more may not be set down here because—Aunt Toe changed her mind after all, but this was not known until Mollie had ventured all her happiness in a small word of three letters that spell a whole lifetime of weal or woe, and the La-de-dah from London having become a *bona fide* settler, lost, it is true, the patronage of the Hon. ——— and Lawrence Hall, but he gained the respect and confidence of the Flat. By the sweat of his brow he floated

out of all his financial difficulties, becoming after all not only the heir to Aunt Toe's millions, but through the influence of Mrs. Major, which proved to be as convincing as her grammar, was asked to contest the constituency against the son of the Hon. Tiptop, and not only won the election from his opponent, but won from Mrs. Major the tribute, "The poor bye, 'tis no mistake he was a bit saft in the brane, an' was the betther av a bit coolin' but shure undher all his thrubbles he behaved like a dacint bye; an' saix I belave 'twas Mollie sayin' no, med a man av' him."

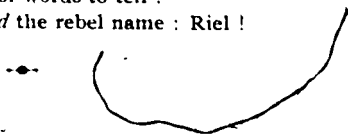
Riel.

A wandering Wild-bird from its prairie nest
 Roamed amid clouds beneath an alien sky ;
 The poise of eagle in that haughty crest,
 And one wild dream : Higher and still more high
 And o'er this lovely prairie land there fell
 The blight of a proud heart's unrest : Riel !

Slumbered the camp. The fields were fair to see ;
 Wigwam and shack grouped 'neath a peaceful sky,
 And over this young land the bonds of harmony
 Were rudely broken by a fierce war-cry—
 And on swift wings of Hate from Passion's hell
 Rose hand 'gainst brother's hand : Riel !

Above the din of battle, hollow sounds
 Of drum, sad dying moans we hear.
 Empty saddles, broken ranks, new-made mounds
 Upon the prairie's bleeding breast. Then a British cheer
 That ends in a wild wail ! from wigwam hear the swell
 In that deep cry of anguish and reproach : Riel !

Oh, Wild-bird ! had'st thou raised thy voice—
 Not in a note of discord—but in song
 That would have made this prairie land rejoice
 To call thee son ! But thou did'st quicken wrong,
 And left to Time saddest of words to tell :—
Writ in his brother's blood the rebel name : Riel !



An Episode at Clarke's Crossing

Old Peter Larue was indisputably the caliphate of the plains; an authority on any subject that might be introduced in any of the four languages; English (broken), French, Sioux and Cree (which he would seldom use).

Daddy Pete, as he was called, had but one grandchild, the only daughter of his son Modeste, and the old man doted on his human flower with a love and devotion almost beyond belief.

Daddy Pete was the sole link between the early days, when no foot-fall save that of the moccasined hunter trod the prairie, and the buffalo swept across the plains in droves, like black clouds, and fast encroaching civilization with its noisy railways, its awkward river ferries, its improvements that came creeping on like an incoming tide, wiping away all the old landmarks, sweeping away old-time associations, and making a new era in the West. With the innovations Daddy Pete (being an aristocrat by nature) would have nothing to do. When the half-picturesque half-squalid splendour of life began to be lost, when "the Company" began to cater to new settlers, then Daddy Pete drew his blanket about him and scornfully moved further West. He would go to the Company's no more. Barter in peltries and other native riches were solemnly conducted by Modeste, and for company's sake he sometimes took his black-eyed daughter along, the gay-striped blankets and colored beads filling Tan-nis' young mind with longings new to the prairie maid.

Daddy Pete's proud boast was that he "never see no railway," and he threatened many times to move camp when the advent of some Missionary gave signs of encroaching influence. To such Modeste gave a warm welcome, for the black-eyed daughter had with her savage ways interested His Lordship greatly, when in those annual trips he saw her. His Lordship pitied her ignorance, and admired her beauty, and calling Modeste aside explained to him his great responsibility, the magnificent opportunity, with the help of this child, for doing something towards the grand work of salvation. He should educate her, prepare her, not for the

wandering life of the camp, but for home and motherhood. All this sounded vague to Modeste but he understood it to mean that 'his gal' was different to other women of the camp, and the Bishop's fair daughter had taken Tannis kindly by the hand and led her to the drawing-room filled with beautiful things, sowing in this way the first seeds of Christianity—and discontent—in the Indian girl's mind.

To Clarke's Crossing then came Mr. Penrhyn, his boyish face full of youthful enthusiasm, came to do his Master's work—the work of salvation. He went out on the chase with Modeste, and after one particular day the latter announced to Daddy Pete that Tannis was to be sent away to the white man's school. To Daddy Pete this came as a death blow. Who would help him prepare the bait for the traps? Who would seek out the rabbit lairs? Who would make the snares and tan the skins, and who would sight the game—for Daddy Pete's eyes were growing dim like long-burned candles. To all those questions Modeste answered nothing. He squatted by the camp fire with his pipe the while the old man argued, then after a long silence he spoke:—"Newitcha will come to the camp. Newitcha is strong; Newitcha will trap the beaver, snare the rabbit, prepare the bait, Newitcha is strong." Daddy Pete stood up, his blanket trailing about him, and his words were full of anger:

"Bring a Cree woman to camp? A Cree woman take the place of his lit'le gal! No! ten times no! Had he not stalked the game and hunted buffalo for sixty-nine years? Had he not followed in the chase and trapped the silver-fox? Had he not worked, saved, *starved* for his lit'le gal—and now bring Newitcha, a Cree woman to fill her place? No! Ten times no!

That night the old man sat by the river many long hours smoking his pipe of kinnikinic, thoughtful, sad, fearing much; and when the next evening came, Newitcha, brass ringed, her face daubed with yellow paint, followed Modeste into camp trudging under the burden of skins—her marriage portion—as befitted the wife of the bravest trapper along the banks of the Saskatchewan, Daddy Pete sighed.

Between the old man and the Cree wife there was unspoken enmity. Newitcha was strong; she was up before dawn laboring and carrying all day; she tanned the pelts and gathered the campa-berry to make pemmican; she built the strong willow stands whereon hung the bear meat drying in the sun. Truly she was strong, but she hated Tannis and she hated the old man.

It was summer then and Daddy Pete with his "lit'le gal" could roam over the plain all day long. At night the air was soft, the grass was kind and the sky watched over them as they sometimes slept under the cottonwood trees. With delight the old man would snare a prairie chicken, and by the river he and his chattering grand-child would build a fire in a little hollow scooped out of the ground, line it with hot coals placing therein the fowl in all its feathers, heaping the savoury bit with red coals, until the tender flesh was done; then upon a table of nature's own laying they would feast in innocent happiness and delight, whispering to each other loving words, and look guardedly over your shoulders when they breathed Newitcha's name.

Then came a day when word from the Bishop, good man, who had arranged with Madam —— at Montreal, to take the prairie maid and educate her—that Tannis was to go. Daddy Pete, after a long day's fasting alone among the cottonwoods, fought out the battle with his own heart, and won just because his only desire was to do whatever was best for "lit'le gal;" but Daddy Pete must himself see her off on the first stage of the long, long journey, he would go as far as the Company's with his "lit'le gal."

The Red River carts were got ready for the overland trip which must be made a paying one. Modeste would bring back freight for the Company, and away from the Crossing one June day went the creaking carts one after the other along the trail leading to the Company's Post. There final preparations were completed for the trip to Winnipeg; there good-by's were said, speechless ones on the part of Daddy Pete, joyous on the part of the dusky maid perched on the rear of the last cart rattling along the grass-grown trail, swinging her stout legs encased in newly-beaded leggings, her tawny tresses a lovely tangle about her bright face, her bare and sun-burned arms waving good-bye while she shouted: "Goo' by——e Daddy; dun fergit t' feed mi' whi' rabbit, an' min' dun' let Newi'cha smash d' palin's behin' de ol' shad, fer de fox'll——git——awa—y—y, goo'by——Dad—d——y——y!"

A bend in the road and she was lost to view. Then over the dust-stirred trail, and above the rattle of the crazy wheels came to Daddy Pete's ears the cry of the wild plover — this being the well-known signal between them ever since she began to follow him about on the chase, when she made the discovery of a new rabbit burrow, or another nest of duck eggs along the sloughs in the deep grass fringing the water.

Daddy Pete tried to answer that cry with the old familiar call, to answer as he had done all the long happy years, but something like a pine knot forged itself into his throat, he threw up his arms, raised his eyes to the Great Spirit and then the tears fell, the first tears since he wept over his darling, a motherless babe thirteen years before. He turned around to pick up his staff to go back, but the Rev. Mr. Penrhyn was standing there too. Daddy Pete could have struck him down where he stood, but Daddy Pete must be excused a great deal; he was a heathenish old man who had been so long upon the plains that he had outgrown whatever goodness he had known, and he was unwilling that civilization should overtake him.

"Ah!" the clergyman said, walking by the side of the old man, "I am too late, I see; I would have liked to have seen Tannis, to have spoken with her, impressing upon her mind the *very great* advantages His Lordship has — secured for her. "You see, Peter," went on the young divine, "She will eventually be of great use to — to us in our work; of great use — to have a native woman whose sympathies will be in touch with — the Indian mind" — Mr. Penrhyn stopped. The face of the old man turned now towards him, was distorted by passion; some inner emotion forced itself to the surface of his thought; he opened his shrunken lips to say something, but the words were left unsaid, his head, whitened by the many hard winters, and crowned by this new grief bowed itself, and moving voiceless lips he trudged on.

There was little opportunity for Mr. Penrhyn to exercise his sacred office here; the old man was beyond all human influences; there was but one thing the clergyman could do—he did that fervently, devoutly; he prayed that the dull old man might see in this the over-guiding Hand.

All this had happened eight years before. Daddie Pete was eight years older, and eight times eight years lonelier and sadder; and in all the long weary months no word from Tannis, save through the occasional visits of Mr. Penrhyn, when on his mission he came to the Crossing. At such times Daddy Pete always went off on the hunt; it seemed as if the minister's coming was the signal for the old man to go away to his wild haunts and away to the traps and snares he would go. All this Mr. Penrhyn saw and grieved for; grieved that no good seed would take root in this old man's hardened heart; for surely it was very offensive and wrong in an old man tottering upon the verge of the grave, not to give heed to Christ's message.

Mr. Penrhyn had been fully ordained a minister; he was an enthusiastic worker in the Vineyard, and he excited the admiration of the Bishop, whose eyes began to look upon him as one worthy to take up the divine work, when he, now an old man, should be called; and sometimes—outside of prayer time—the Bishop looked at his lovely daughter, and thought—

Over study and hardships attendant on the missionary life had impaired Mr. Penrhyn's health. His Lordship thought a sea voyage might be beneficial, but something in the thought of going back to London made the clergyman tremble; an apprehensive glance, half timid, half despairing, he gave His Lordship, who, perhaps, suddenly remembering something, moved restlessly across the room, and, placing a hand kindly upon the young man's head, murmured:—

"He that cometh to Me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst."

The temptations beyond the sea must not be risked; the witchery of London life contrasted with the deprivations of missionary labor might—what might it not do?

Just at this time of doubt, the mail, which came by slow and circuitous route, reached His Lordship, and with it came the announcement of Madam ——— that Tannis Larue had completed her studies. Madam, in her own words, was sending her back "accomplished in person, amiable in mind," and Madam "hoped the care and attention lavished upon this wild child of the plains would repay His Lordship." (Madam might have more truthfully said "Daddy Pete," for the wealth of peltries that went to balance the expenses were provided by many a long day's chase) for the cost of her education." You see, the phraseology was more delicate, but, after all, that was what was really meant.

So, word having to be sent to Modeste, it was decided that Mr. Penrhyn's holidays should be spent at the Crossing. A summer there would build up his strength; the dangers of the city must be avoided. *"In due season we shall reap if we faint not,"* said the good Bishop. And to carry word to Modeste went the young clergyman.

Once more were the shaky old carts strung out upon the trail, so teased by travel and traffic that the grass had lost its habit of creeping boldly over the roadway, and now shrank timidly back. Upon the front cart came the young minister with Modeste, and behind them Daddy

Pete, his withered old face shining with a joy that seemed brighter than earth. He had come thus far, to where, eight years ago, he had said good-by to his "little gal."

"Hoh, boy!" said the old man, turning to the minister and forgetting his eight years' enmity, as Modeste drove away along the trail, "my Mod's he cum plenty soon—two, five, twenty, 'leven days, hoh!"

Mr. Penrhyn was glad to find Daddy Pete in a friendly frame of mind once more, and he walked back along the way, patiently listening to the garrulous old heathen, who was expressing his delight in exultant chuckles, rubbing his claw-like yellow fingers together and repeating over and over again: "My little gal cum some more plenty soon; plenty rabbit, plenty duck, plenty berry, hoh!"

At the Company's, whither Daddy Pete carried his load of peltries, the clergyman waited, while an exchange was made for powder and shot in generous quantities, tea and tobacco in considerable supply, and, his dim old eyes illumined by genuine love-light, he demanded: "Hoh! fixin's f'r gals?"

This being out of the usual line of demands at the Company's, the puzzled attendant began a voluble jargon of Sioux, but Mr. Penrhyn, divining the old man's thoughts, explained that Modeste's daughter was coming home from the East, and, doubtless, it was some gew-gaws Daddy Pete wanted.

A gorgeous array of green, yellow and red blankets was produced, a selection made by the old man, whose skinny fingers fumbled critically over texture and size. Then bright print stuffs, gilt pins, brass bells, rings, and bright beads in goodly supply were taken, against which tawdry lot many a valuable pelt was piled by the Company; and the minister looked on, noted, with pain, the simple delight of the silly old man, and he sadly thought how all the years devoted to teaching the beautiful story of the Gospel were barren of results, and it grieved him to think that this old man, over whom the shadow of death hung, should place his mind on things that perish, and the minister sighed.

That evening beside the camp fire Daddy Pete, mumbling and smiling, spread out the purchases that were to be his offerings, his gifts—gifts that would make glad the heart of his "little gal"! This crimson ribbon to weave in her black hair; these glittering beads to close about her throat; these shining bands her bared arms to clasp. He mumbled and

laughed as he had not done for years—Newitcha was not there with her sharp tongue to reprove him for his silliness, and in one—two days, his "lit'le gal" would come!

The clergyman spoke solemnly to old Pete, earnestly remonstrating with him on the sin of setting his failing mind upon the vanity of earthly joys; reminding him of eternal glories that fade not—that were to be had without money and without price!

The old man listened, and shook his head with many a scornful "hoh!" intimating broadly that what "the Company" had was "plenty good for ol' Pete," and that his "lit'le gal" would have "the best the Company kept!"

Each evening Mr. Penrhyn passed some hours by the camp fire with Daddy Pete, speaking words of divine promise to the old man who sometimes listened, sometimes slept, and ever and always kept busy fingers among the trumpery gifts, his eyes blinking with childish delight, his shrunken lips whispering "my lit'le gal!"

Each day he added to his gifts, and after spreading them out, and mumbling over them with childish delight, he would trudge over the prairie to the bend in the trail and there with worn shaking hands shading his sight, peer across the waste of green for signs of the carts.

At last the long line, like motes, appeared in the distance, connected, and then became a snake that crept slowly on, slowly nearer; the serpentine coil-like thing breaking again into fragments, and just as the sun, big-eyed and wondering, cast a last look over the prairie trail, came the carts around the bend, the peculiar music of the wheels like shrieks of tortured souls suffering purgatorial pains.

And where was daddy's "lit'le gal?" Daddy Pete wiped the mist from his sight and stared. He winked hard and stared again; something like a fluttering bird rose from his heart and like that same thing, wounded, beat helplessly a broken wing.

"How do you do, grandpa? Oh, it is Mr. Penrhyn! how good of you both to meet me here!" A small muffled hand sought Daddy Pete's palsied palm, and something, he thought like a closely woven snare, barred the meeting of their lips. Mr. Penrhyn stared at this vision too, stared with unbelieving eyes—eyes that spoke their amazement. Where was the little wild child of the plains? Where was Daddy's "lit'le gal?"

These the questions that rose in the minds of the two men standing there in silent wonder; the confusion of the moment was broken by awful roars of "haw!" "gee!" from Modeste as the stolid oxen, foaming at the mouth, and panting after the heavy march, switching their stumpy tails at the horde of sand flies following the carts, passed along the trail, the shouts sounding like profanity amid the serene stillness.

They walked on down the trail, the clergyman and the young girl side by side, the old man, dull of eye and trembling in limb, following after, in the fashion of his race. Was that his little gal—that tall creature arrayed as was His Lordship's daughter, the same grace of manner, the same sweet voice, that walk—his little gal? Tears of disappointment welled up in the eyes of the old man; welled up and overflowed their banks, and in his mind but one wish: to see her turn round once, to hear her call him "Daddy," in the old-time tender way; hoh! he'd give the best season's lot of silver-fox pelts to hear her call him "Daddy Pete" once again; to hear the cry of the wild plover as she gave it that day she called out "Goo'-bye, Daddy!" Ah! that was so long ago, so long ago, and he had come between them since then.

"You see," Mr. Penrhyn was saying, "what we need is schools; now you can understand that we—that Eastern people are not—cannot be in sympathy with the—well, with the Indian mind; now my idea—in fact His Lordship's idea—when we asked your father—to—to send you to be—educated," he hesitated, "—was to—to—to secure that which your people—the Indians, you know, lack—sympathy."

"I understand," she answered, "I am to"——

"To teach," said Mr. Penrhyn, "there is a great work—a noble work, Miss"——

"Oh! call me Tannis, Mr. Penrhyn," she said, turning to him and smiling. "Do you believe," breaking into a little laugh, "that I did not know my own family name until I went to Madam——'s. It was exactly like being a princess of the blood, not hearing one's real name, wasn't it?" and a laugh of real merriment rang out from her lips.

"Hoh!" The shout made them turn suddenly; there was the old man rubbing his hands and gasping with delight, tears of joy rolling down his shrivelled cheeks; that laugh took him back eight years, but the next moment it was gone.

"How grandpa has altered!" she said.

"He is quite childish," replied Mr. Penrhyn. And while the two walked on, talking and smiling, Daddy Pete, leaning more heavily upon his staff, followed, his heart sinking lower and lower until in one great sob it swamped with his hope, leaving nothing but a dumb despair.

They went to the new brick hotel. It was there Daddy Pete was stopping, but he knew now that the smoke-grimed tent would never do. At the brick hotel a room for "Modeste's gal" was ordered, and having settled her comfortably there, away went the old man, back to where the tent was pitched against the Company's. He went sadly back upon the old trail, the fag-end of his happiness hanging by the slenderest thread to his sore heart; he would get out the "fixin's;" ah, yes, he had made a mistake in going to meet her without them; "hoh! the bright things would bring him nearer to his lit'le gal!"

He remembered well one trip made in the long ago when he brought home to her a string of blue beads—remembered the shout of joy and how she clung about his neck; how he fastened them on her baby throat; he would go to her now with brighter, better ones; a double row, and larger than those of long ago. He gathered up his offerings with eager hands that shook until the gew-gaws rattled again and again, and he laughed aloud, anticipating her delight. Then he started out acknowledging for the first time in his life that "things mou't a bin dif'rent bim-by" "if he had "ever see a railway."

He was taken to the room where Modeste's gal was, but she said she was "dressing for dinner," which really meant she was changing the dusty travelling gown for a fresher one, but some way the message, given through a narrow opening in the door, gave to her a more embarrassing splendour; the old man hugging his offerings, felt a chill rise up in his heart, but still he hung about, unwilling to believe it was not the same "lit'le gal" he had loved and tended with so much devotion and care.

By and bye she came out looking lovelier and fresher than before; the dainty grey frock with its crimson velvet bodice showing the outlines of a lithe form, her step, a natural grace of movement blending with the English training in something captivating and complete. Mr. Penrhyn was standing by the window and if questioned could doubtless truthfully declare that this descendant of a Sioux mother was to him, nothing more than "that most promising person." Daddy Pete was waiting too

squatted upon the floor, and at her feet like some devout worshipper he laid with trembling hands his offerings.

He saw the hot tide of shame rise from throat to chin and from chin to forehead, and the last slender thread of his hope snapped within, when, raising her hands with a motion of horror she said :—

"For me? oh, grandpa! I could never wear—such things—now!"

The old man looked at his "little gal" just one little moment, then without a word gathered up the gifts again and trudged back to the tent where he found the oxen and carts forming a barricade. Modeste was there, unusually silent, smoking his pipe of kinnikinnic and watching the red blaze, over which the iron pot hung on a tripod of poplar.

"I dun'no, boy," Daddy Pete was saying one evening returning from the chase, "I b'leve lit'le gal's sick."

His son's answer was to draw deeper puffs of his kinnikinnic. "Ol' Pete got plenty—hoh, boy—by'm-bye die putty soon,—plenty beaver, plenty silver fox—all for lit'le gal—better go back school some more plenty—hoh boy!"

In truth the prairie maid grew weary and wan because the long happy holiday was over; the young minister must go back to Emanuel College; he would go back and tell his lordship that he would wed the Sioux maid; he would ask to be sent to some remote northern station, where, among the wilds, together with his wild prairie flower, he might hear the glad tidings.

When Daddy Pete learned of this arrangement he gave such a shout of joy that a startled covey of ducks were sent a-wing. "Hoh!" he shouted in his cracked voice, "Ol' Pete got plenty buffalo, plenty fox, plenty beaver!" He laughed so long and so often that Newitcha scowled more darkly each day. He smoothed down his lit'le gal's dark locks tenderly and said "hoh!" with such explosive earnestness that Newitcha muttered in her Cree tongue savagely and often, with many shakings of the head.

Then the day came when Mr. Penrhyn said good-bye to his friends of the camp; he would come back in two months. At Clarke's Crossing Modeste would meet him; he would come to be with his prairie flower, never more to part, their hearts were young and strong and hopeful and he went his way alone.

Soon the poplar trees sent their shivering leaves hither and thither ; the evenings grew chill and longer and drearier ; the summer was gone and the winter set in early. It would be a long hard winter. Daddy Pete said so, and hadn't he learned it from the beavers and the gophers, who know such things ?

He had not come, there was no such thing as mail delivery beyond the Company's in those days, but surely he would come. Had he not said so ?

One day an old Indian, passing along the trail towards Fort-à-la-Corne, stopped at Pete's camp. He hung about the lodge all day, and after supping he loosened his belt, and from inner rags that covered his wretched body, stolidly and soberly produced a letter ; he explained that he had been asked to give it to the " moonias squaw." It proved to be for Tannis, and it was from Luke Penrhyn, dated months before, asking her to come down with her father to see him before he left for England. The Bishop having suddenly decided on sending over to London one of the clergy to secure funds for opening new missions in the far North,—would she go to him to say good-bye ?

The letter was written in October, and it was April now ; the Indian had got it when he was at the Company's last ; he had been on the hunt and was now going back to his band.

Tannis did not leave the little poplar bluff all the next day ; she sat there white of face, reading over and over again his words, and suffering as no tongue can tell.

She told Daddy Pete the contents of the letter in her own words, and the old man smiled contentedly at thought of having his darling his own, longer. May came and with it another letter, this time from across the sea and through the agency of the Company ; it was written but a few weeks before, and with it came hope thrice renewed. It said that he would leave for Canada in six weeks ; the work had been almost completed ; great interest had been taken in the new land and he had secured funds for missions in the far North ; there he " would make his home with his sweet prairie flower." And she believed !

Once more she sang in the old happy way. Once more she set snares with Daddy Pete, hunted for wild duck eggs along the thatch-grown lakelets, and scurried across the hillocky grass for wild-birds' nests.

Daddy Pete grew feeble ; he did not go on the hunt always now ; New-itcha watched under her black brows, and many little brown faces hunted among the grass for the kammass root all day, and at sundown gathered with noisy arrogance about the knee of Modeste, claiming full share of his attention, and the half-sister, with the strange dress, crept in silent sorrowing supplication to Daddy Pete's side, where she found refuge and sympathy as when a child.

June came with flower and bursting bud and Modeste was going to the Company's. The lark was not so early nor so blithe of song as Tannis, now. All day long she played with the smaller witch-like brown brothers and sisters, sang and watched the trail. Four days passed and then Modeste came back alone.

Tannis sang no more. The snares were neglected ; Daddy Pete dozed nearly all day now, and the son had double work to perform, and another moss-bag hung upon the poplar tree beside the tepee ; Newitcha followed Modeste on the chase and to Tannis was left the care and the work of the camp.

One day Daddy Pete came suddenly upon her below the camp where the poplars trembled and shivered, and where awe-whisperings of the winds were heard. She was lying prostrate upon the ground, beating the grass, her fingers reached out, moaning the hurt that had so long been held in bounds within her breaking heart. One moment the old man stood transfixed ; he knew nothing of emotion, but his dull mind could understand one thing ; his " little gal " was suffering. He caught the straggling white hairs that hung down about his bewildered head and cried out ; he gathered her up in his trembling arms as he had done many a time in her childish griefs, and crooned over her in his Sioux tongue : ' O ' O ! *Nicante pi kin magaqu iyeaca ateyapi pa kin akan, hinphaya qa acnakian !* "

This was harder to bear than cruel words ; she had hated the camp ; had despised her tribe ; had longed to leave the one kind creature whose only thought had ever been her comfort, her enjoyment, and now she was without all. " O ! Daddy ! Daddy ! ! "

That cry at last ! she was clinging to him, and folded to his heart in the old, old way ! At last Daddy Pete had found his little gal ! He

* " O ' O ! Let the heart's rain fall upon the head of thy father, he will weep for thee " "

understood it all now ; understood it as if he had been learned and clever, and not the silly old heathen he was.

" Hoh ! don't cry plenty much ; boy come back ! Ol' Pete make walk Company ; ol' Pete fin' boy ! hoh ! Lit'le gal make plenty laugh some more ; hoh ! " And the next morning, before dawn, afoot and feeble, away went Daddy Pete, his knife sheathed and hanging from his belt, upon his bent shoulders the pack of furs, his heart full of a great sorrow, his troubled mind strong in one determination—his " lit'legal's " happiness to find.

When Tannis awoke the next morning, Daddy Pete was many miles on his journey. At first she thought he had gone to look at the snares or lingered along the sloughs, but as the day grew and then died out, and he did not come, she knew that he had gone. Daddy would bring—he would bring word ; he *might* bring a letter, a letter that would explain everything—or, oh, joy of joys ! would he bring her lover ?

The third day after this she was sitting by the tent door drying roots. She saw coming up the trail a figure. It was a white man, and she knew the dress to be that of a missionary. She was unable to rise, for a faintness and trembling of the limbs overcame her, but, when the blur had passed from her sight and he came nearer, she saw it was a stranger. He spoke to her in Cree.

She explained that her father was absent, and, learning that the stranger had lost his way, she offered him the hospitality of the camp, making supper and attending to the brown babies that peeped from curious corners at the newcomer.

Tannis now wore the ordinary dress of the Indian women ; her hair, neatly braided, hung down her back, and nothing, save her language when she spoke in the English tongue, would betray her better training. She spoke to the children in the Cree tongue, as the stranger had, in that language, first addressed her.

During the preparation for the meal the stranger told Tannis that he was on his way to a new mission field. His Lordship, the Bishop, had received large funds from England ; the work of carrying the Gospel to the far north was opening and he was now on his way to take the post destined for Mr. Penrhyn.

The clergyman did not observe the wild look fixed upon him ; he did not note the clenching of the fingers, nor did he see the blood drip from the palms of those shaking hands.

"And Mr. — — — Penrhyn?"

"Ah, you knew him then? Yes, I believe his route was along this way — Oh, Penrhyn? poor fellow!" The speaker shook his head solemnly, and then gave his attention to the venison before him.

"Is — — — he — — — dead?"

She gasped this with so much eagerness that the stranger looked up, but the face, though white and tired looking, was void of expression.

"It's rather a sad story," the gentleman said, "but, as you knew him — — —. You see," he went on, suddenly, "His Lordship thought a good deal of Penrhyn—rather favored him we used to think, but out here somewhere he met an Indian girl; she had some sort of education I believe, and — well, I guess he fell in love with her—compromised himself by some sort of promise I believe, and of course, His Lordship was obliged to — — — send him away."

"Ah!" then it was the Bishop — sent him — away?"

"Yes, you see Penrhyn was the second son of Lord Gathness. He was a gentleman, and he couldn't — oh, well, you understand — — —."

"And this Mr. Pen — — —?" her voice failed, but her face betrayed nothing.

"Penrhyn," said the visitor, as if he suddenly recollected the subject—"well, you see, after His Lordship got him out of the way, and over in London, it appears Penrhyn's father died quite suddenly, just as he was about to sail, in fact, and the elder brother, who at the time was in the south of France, coming home in haste, his yacht was lost in a gale crossing the Channel, and my friend Penrhyn, came in for the whole thing, estate and title."

Tannis neither moved nor spoke. She felt a wave of something like fear coming over her; something sharp like a little stab seemed to enter her heart—it was his letter, the last letter, which she kept close to her flesh—that last sweet false message to "his prairie flower!"

"It was a great disappointment—a great blow to His Lordship"—

"A blow to His Lordship? it was His Lordship sent him away, was it not?"

"Ah, yes—but you see before Penrhyn—who was, you understand, a younger son—left England the lady Agatha Glyde, to whom he was engaged, threw him over for his brother Audrey—what shocked His Lordship, who knew the story—was that Penrhyn should throw up his

missionary work, for you know his brother's death left him heir to everything, and he married Lady Agatha when"—

The speaker saw the girl sway, but she seemed to recover herself, and put up her hand in a bewildered way, pressing the other above her breast, as though something hindered her breathing.

"You are Peter Larue's grand-daughter?" said the stranger, and he held out pitying hands. But the girl-woman tottered by him, passed from the tent, and was seen no more.

Daddy Pete came back from his trip more feeble than ever. He did not seem to realize the absence of his grand-daughter. Sometimes he would ask pettishly 'had she come in yet?' and Modeste who grieved in silence, would look at Newitcha, and that black-eyed wife awed into silence would whisper "*acendigo*"! and gather her brown blood about her knee.

Sometimes the old man would rouse up and say he must go and find her; he would gather his pack of furs and then sitting down to rest, would doze off, and waking, forget the intention.

One evening Modeste whispered to the old man: "She was at the Crossing yesterday; she asked them to put her across—the ferryman went up to his shack, and when he came back she was gone."

Daddy Pete cried out on hearing this. He would go now; this very night; he would be there when she came again; his little gal, he had the beads all ready for her. He took the gew-gaw things from his bosom where he hid them the day she refused them so scornfully; he drew them through his fingers, and the sparkle was reflected in his dim old eyes. He looked at them and laughed, thinking of her joy when he would place them on her throat, and he said "hoh!" a great many times and wiped his eyes.

They went away to the Crossing, not telling Newitcha where they were going. Modeste carried the pack, and waited patiently while Daddy Pete sat by the wayside and rested while he slept. Thus they reached the crossing.

It was moonlight, bright opaline moonlight, and across the river fell a broad shaft of light that sparkled and shone and broadened until it seemed to the foolish old man to be a road leading somewhere.

That must be the road the *Sinsapa* talked about; the road leading to that beautiful hunting grounds; he said it sparkled with jewels; gates of pearl? hoh! he could see them; could see the jewels glistening and

sparkling over there ; it led right over the river ; *he* had said it was a river. If *he* went that road, then Daddy's lit'le gal would follow after ! Hoh ! it was but a step. Daddy Pete tottered to the very edge of the river and looked across. Something was over there. Was it Daddy's little gal wanting ?

Upon the river a shadow fell, swift rose a winged form, and the dead stillness was broken by that plaintive far-reaching call, the cry of the wild plover. A cry of joy — one instant a bent figure was outlined against the sky, its arms outreached — then the answering note rang out, waking Modeste from a fatigued sleep ; a loud splash that broke the jewel-like surface of the silver bar upon the water, and then silence.

Along the bank of the river ran the trapper Modeste. The lustrous flood of light across the river fascinated his eyes. He called ; he went up and down peering, watching ; but no sign of the old man. He surely slept somewhere in the long grass. He was old and weary.

At dawn some half-breeds came to the ferry with their traps and tents ; they found a distracted man there, old Peter Larue's son, stone deaf to words and wringing his hands. By-and-by the ferryman came down, and they began the toilsome pull across. Part way over Modeste, who had been staring into the water with wild eyes, gave a shout and pointed down. There was great commotion then. One dived into deep water and came up holding some dark thing. Outstretched hands took up Daddy Pete's still form dripping with jewel drops of water. He had passed through the pearly gates ! Ah, yes, Daddy Pete had surely found his "lit'le gal" at last. Within his shrivelled old hands, tightly clasped, the double row of shining beads, his face calm, smiling, child-like ; the deep sleep of death had blotted out all the lonely sorrow-fed thoughts ; Daddy Pete had gone to his "lit'le gal," gone at her call, and, simple old man he, taken his offerings, his gifts.

At the same hour the doors of a fashionable club in fashionable London opened ; gay laughter and badinage passed from lip to lip of the throng of noble lords just leaving the fascinations of the card table.

"I say, Gathness ! before we go tell us about that tawny beauty of yours out West ?" drawled one.

A handsome man of the *beau monde* flushes to the temples, as he laughs carelessly and says : "Oh ! you mean that little episode at Clarke's Crossing ?"

Prairie Verses.

The smile of summer fainter grows and colder ;
The wild flower cowers close to drooping stem ;
The wind grown keen and wild, now waxes bolder,
Chills the soft dew, and makes each drop a gem.
From latticed clouds a burst of sunlit glory
Wakes the dull fields mounded with yellow grain,
Rivalling the wild-bird comes the herd-boy's story,
In joyous notes re-echoing across the rolling plain.
This storied land with all its dawning splendour
Touches the heart with a joy that breaks in pain,
Awakening regret for days that are no more, and tender
Memories of happiness that long hath silent lain.

The prairie grasses twine green fingers close,
The wild flowers bud and bloom, then with a sigh
Join in the west wind's frolic, first a dance
Then a wild rush onward, and the sky
Frowns darkling down ; Summer eyes askance
Then timidly glides by.

Swift with blinding gloss
The snow comes like some fairy,
Mounting the stacks and covering the way ;
Sheltering the weakly roots that sway and curve and toss
Before the north wind coming down with sleet in battle fray,
And in a sheen of brightest light
'Tis winter on the prairie.

How the End Came.

"Where's Dan'l?"

Without ceasing her moulding operations upon the bannocks she was making, Dan'l's wife made a side motion with her head that carried the questioner's glance from the rough box that served as a table, to something lying helplessly upon the floor of the shack, and snoring sonorously in a drunken sleep.

"So he's drunk, too," said the man turning with inquiring glance that was full of pity, but the expressionless face was turned somewhat away from his view, she made no sign of having heard, going on with her work as though not noting the presence of the rough looking fellow standing by the door. He was neglected in appearance, bits of broken straws threaded themselves upon his worn jacket; his boots were big and shapeless, and the hand that went up to his head in a motion that spoke a troubled mind, was knotted and seamed by hard labour.

It was December—the day before Christmas. The threshers had hoped to finish the stacks that day, but Biggs had come in with some freight that morning, and Biggs had secured a "permit," and its effects were evident in the spasmodic humming of the threshing machine, now a low hum, now silent, and in maudlin shouts from the shadow of the empty bags piled carelessly and uselessly upon the snow.

"Ther'll be hell t' pay among th' men if *he* don't keep sober—fer a spell anyway—the men have left the stacks; Peggit's eternally paralyzed, an' ther's a storm comin' up—kin ye get Dan'l t' come out an'——"

"I know," interrupted the woman stopping to look up and sighing heavily. "I told him—but"—her eyes fell upon her bared arm; there was a purple mark there, a purple bruise that told its own story of brutality and rage and her eyes so dull a moment ago, took in their depths a savage gleam; the Indian blood rose to her dark-skinned face; her eyes sought again that deep bruise—wandered to the white face upon the floor, then she turned a look of half hungry shame to the man shuffling

uneasily by the door, and she saw him dash away tears that came, dash them away more in anger than shame. "Don't mind, Dave," she said, "it can't last always—some day th' end'll come—th' end'll come."

"See here, Liz; jest you never min' doin' them there bannocks; it ain't grub they'll be astin'; the'r printed t' the nozzle 'ith Biggs' rot-gut, and," glancing through the rag-wadded window, "the machine's stopped—the'r got themselves primed fer th' night—an if *he* gets into the kag—ther's no more work a-goin' on t'day;" another nod sideways, "ye can't stan' it—much longer Liz—ye can't"—

"It'll end sometime—somehow," she said, beginning to mould again the thick dough.

"See here Liz," the man said, coming nearer, "this ain't no place fer a woman—er won't be b' night," he added, as fragmentary oaths, calls, shouts and ribald song came from where the early sunset shadows lingered among the straw-stacks beyond the shanty,

"I kin' of b'leeve I—will go," she said, pausing and folding her arms thoughtfully; "I could be back in time t' get ther breakfast—d'ye think *he'd* mind Dave if I was t' go?"

"This ai'n't no place fer no woman," repeated the big fellow, "get on yer shawl—I got th' jumper at th' door—if ye want t' come back in th' mornin'—why I'll fetch ye—but"—

"I kin walk over in plenty time t' get the'r breakfast," she said drawing a woollen hood over her black hair; then as the whoops and curses grew louder, and staggering forms came towards the shanty, with a frightened motion she moved nearer to Dave Glance, and the crooning winds tossing the fluffy snow whirled it madly in her face as the door opened and Biggs lurched in unsteadily.

Out west the winter evening shades fall swiftly, suddenly down. Dawn breaks over the prairie early, so early that it seems but a breath from frown of midnight to blush of day.

The wind had grown wilder—it howled with furious blast; seated in the low jumper, the woman felt its sting, and must have suffered, but within her breast beat a wilder storm yet. Ten long weary, hard, bitter years—ten years had she endured neglect, misery, hunger—and now *blows*. Ah, it might have been different had she known—it might have been different had her baby lived. It only came to bring one little smile and then return to the God who gave, and who—was it in pity?—called it back again.

She shivered. She felt something like a warm band tighten 'round her heart—her sore heart: she knew it was a friendly sheltering arm that reached about her ragged shawl, that would ever shield her from the cold and the cruelty—*if she would*. For one awful moment came the intense desire to lie back against that sheltering arm—to lie there, to rest there, to die there—Oh, God! would death ever come?

"Are you cold, Liz?"

"Take me back—back—take me back!" Her bare hands clenched the rein above his strong hold of the lines; her hood had fallen back, strands of black tawny waves streamed about her wild face—she leaned away from him panting like some mad thing that having been rudely caught, and injured had broken away.

"Liz!"

The man's astonished eyes looked into her distorted face, as with a strong pull she drew upon one rein, and the pony, making a sudden and dangerous swerve, went swiftly back along the trail.

"I'll take you back—my girl—I'll take you back, but my God! Liz, I don't want to leave you there—with him—won't you come now, Liz;—come with me now? He'll kill you some day—the cruel white blood is not like ours Liz!—Will you come?"—

"Take me back to—my—husband! Back—back!"— She was leaning forward; an unearthly look of fear within her eyes; some sudden madness lurked therein he thought, and the breath that came from her parted lips found vent in moans such awful fear surged within.

The pony dashed along faster, faster, and no word was again spoken. As they approached the shanty they heard loud sounds of carousal and revelry; the thresher was silent, the stacks deserted, the half empty bags of grain thronged tipsily together; among the deserted wheat fell flurries of snow; all work had ceased and the surrounding silence seemed to enchain all with warping hush above the wild din within the shack. A little dog shivered upon the door step; he barked gladly as the woman, leaving the low jumper approached the door. She let the little shivering brute pass into the warmth before her—why should it suffer too?

Within, all was confusion, bedlam; the big broad mud chimney yawned its yellow-red flame that shot up in roars with the sudden draught from the opened door; great chunks of resinous pine were burning. In various parts of the apartment huddled the threshers,—drunk,

deliriously drunk; Biggs himself, the last to succumb, helplessly stretched beneath the window, and upon his matted hair the drifting snows filtering in.

"Come Dan'l, come home!"

Roused by the touch and awakened more fully by the roar of maudlin voices, he sat up, blinking in a dazed way about him; rolled over with an inarticulate oath, and slept again.

"Dan'l!"

This time there was some note in the call that made him lift his head and look at her, first in drunken amazement, then with ferocious frown.

"Dan'l, come home with me—come home with me—I'm—af—raid—come home." She was clinging to him now, clinging and sobbing, bending over to whisper, "I'm afraid, oh, Dan'l—I'm afraid"—

"Wha' z'r fra'd 'f—'ll sta' th b' yswha' z—rr—fra'd!"—

"For God's sake, Dan'l come—come home with me—it's me, Liz—come—come home—*God knows what'll happen if you don't!*"

Her answer a stinging blow—his arm in its full strength fell across her breast, where many another mark was recorded, both within and without. She knew *he* was standing there; she knew he saw the brutal blow; it had staggered her a little, and she turned away white of face and dumb with the anguish that is too deep for tears. She put her hand upon Dave Glance's arm—the arm that shook with the rage he curbed (for her sake) and she said:

"Dave, take me home—home."

Wild eyed and blanched of face they looked within each other's eyes for one awful moment—he with questioning entreaty, she dumbly submissive to that unspoken word. They turned and left the shanty; his face fixed, determined—hers, with the shadow of death, the death of hope.

She felt that some one was tucking the rough hide robe about her with kindly hands; the wind, now wildly furious was beating in her face and cutting through her thin clothing. She felt nothing but the touch of loving hands, and a warm wave seemed to rise in her heart, to overflow long-clogged channels and carry in it's tide all the long years' heaped-up insults and suffering. She knew now all the sorrows, all the degradation, all the suffering—for her—were over. She knew *the end had come.*

Through snow billows the pony plunged ; the blinding blast with its scurrying flakes whirled in her face like sea foam ; the wind gathered in new fury, and down, from the poplar bluffs came a whistling sound that ended in a wail, and on the wings of the impetuous storm went the woman's thought.

Ten years of heart-hunger, ten years of work and want, ten years of cruelty, of insult, of neglect ; and in all she had made no moan ; and now, this one blow of the many had proved too much ; *he had seen*—she could bear no more !

What was the madness that overcame her that time so long ago ? Before *he* came with his white false face—had not one who loved her then, and loved her still, been true ? Her Indian blood tided in hot shame, remembering *his* look, when he came back from the log-drive to find her the wife of a white man, and from her lips broke a low moan.

"Liz !" She felt that strong arm about her once again, and the same words, "will you come now ?"

Would she go ? When her babe lay in its tiny coffin, and a bout of maudlin intemperance found her protector—oh ! the irony of the word—absent from her side, who was it fashioned the little bed where, so still, so beautiful, flesh of her flesh was laid ? Who was it placed within nature's kindly bosom the small form, and covered so softly, so warmly from the cruel world without, her own ? Who was it held her empty hands, and led her back to her bereaved and poverty touched home, and sat in silence through all that lonely day ?

And now he had said again : "Would she go ?" She was tired—so tired. Wearied out by the long day's work ; up at dawn cooking, washing, carrying empty bags and tying full ones—sworn at, cursed, struck, by the hand that should have sheltered.

There was something supporting her—something human and kind. She saw with horror that they had reached the very spot where she had called to him to 'take her back.' There was the mark upon the snow where the sled had turned about ; she closed her eyes lest the fear should come upon her again. She would go back no more ! They drove past the place in silence. The cold was intense ; the stars came out coldly bright, like eyes dilated with fear ; her tired head had fallen back and pressed against his shoulder and some new band closed about her, a broadening chain infrangible, dense, and something seemed to weld her life to his, at last. They were before her shanty door, and he was saying as he

helped her out :—"There's some papers I must get to take with me—I'll go right on to the shack, it'll only be a run of six hours there and back. Get your things packed my girl—I'll fetch fresh horses; we'll make Cameron's by noon, then Liz—so help me God, girl, I'll do my duty by ye."

She raised one arm as if to keep him from coming nearer; it fell heavily across her bosom, just where that other blow fell, and as the remembrance came, her face altered with an awful defiance, "I will be ready" she said.

She turned and went into the cold hovel she called home; the chill struck her anew and as it had not done before; mechanically she arranged a fire and as the blaze crept through the sticks and sent out a red glow, it seemed like some demon eye watching her as she paced up and down the shabby room like some criminal awaiting dawn and the summons to a shameful death. Two hours went by. To and fro, ~~to~~ and fro. Three hours ticked off by the little round-faced clock dimly showing through the gloom. And this was the end? She looked at the muddled walls and in the night shadows the huge logs were like giant arms that held her prisoned there; the white-faced clock was ticking madly: she stopped before it, watching the hands telling the seconds, and shouting, it seemed:—six-hours-there-and-back-there-and-back-and-back-back-back."

In one hour he would be back! What should she take with her? She laughed aloud—broken shoes upon her poor tired feet, the ragged frock she wore—these her possessions; then she began to cry softly at first, then, as she stooped to take from a covered box some white thing neatly folded, her voice found vent.

"Willie! Willie! My baby!" Surely that cry reached the bars of Paradise.

Her face lay within the folds of the little garment in which so many happy-sad tears had been woven with the stitches; she knelt there while the dawn shadows crept in stealthily and hovered over her bowed head. The fire died out; the wind grew hushed as if in holy awe at the wild grief within, and white-faced dawn, as if paled by so much human suffering, fell quietly upon that lone shanty on the lonely prairie.

"I call God to witness" she cried raising two trembling hands "call Him to witness I—can—bear—no more!"

She rose, folded the little garment to her breast that heaved, but no tears fell—grief had parched that fountain.

Out into that fair Christmas morn she passed, leaving the door ajar behind her; the purple streaks of dawn were sliding into the grey-red bars; what was that crimson blur against the sky? Sunrise already? Should she ever see the sun rise again without shame? As she looked the crimson spot broadened, deepened, and spread, until, to her bewildered sight, it seemed God's wrath bursting in a visible sign upon her guilty intention. Quickly stooping to shut out the sight, she tore away with her bare hands the ice-bound snow, making a little hollow just above her babe's quiet bed, placing within it the robe, white, like unto the pure snow itself. "I will not bring the black shadow over this—no, no! It will be with you, my babe, pure and white—while I—O God! O God! while I ———."

Her heart gave one wild bound; upon the white robe were crimson marks! was it God's anger come down? How nervous and foolish she was—it was caused by her bleeding fingers.

Far to the south, the way he must come, and beneath that dull red cloud she saw a dark speck moving; it grew and grew; it must be his horses galloping on like that.

"Six hours there and back." He was coming; coming to take her away from her misery, from abuse, from neglect, from the blows yes, from everything—from her babe's grave—her only hope!

What awful struggle went on within that distraught mind in that awful moment? The agony of despair; the bitter remembrance; the blows, the curses; and against the bottomless depths of it all, nothing to weigh but a little smile that had died out in that first breath and been lost in eternity so long, oh, so long ago! The horses were quite near now; they had entered the lower field gate—they were coming up the lane. She saw him—saw Dave Glance—saw him urging on the galloping horses with furious haste, while from their nostrils came clouds of steam, every nerve strained, and, almost before he drew rein, she heard him call:

"Come—COME!—Quick, for God's sake—COME!"

"NO, I WILL NOT GO!"

He had leaped from the sleigh and was panting so hard he could scarcely gasp: "Come—for Christ's sake!"

"I will not go—I will wait until the end comes!" she said, and looking in his blanched face she saw an awful horror there. Without another word she leaped into the sleigh and turned her wild eyes to where the dull red blur hung, now a thick grey mass. The horses raced back along the trail; past the poplar bluffs now transparent with yellow sunshine; the branches crystalized and iridescent in the sunshine; past the low fence-line fringed with frost; back over the road she had a few hours ago gone with desolation in her heart. Urged by whip and call, the horses bounded along and suddenly she was borne in view of—
WHAT?

A smouldering heap; stacks, shack, threshers, grain, all levelled to the ground and smoking. Here and there across the defiled snow, yellow red embers like writhing serpents creeping, creeping. They led her to where something covered up lay—something that did not move.

She was calm—unnaturally calm. It was her hand that lifted back the coarse cloth, and there beneath it she saw her husband DEAD.

Slowly—silently they went back over the prairie trail on that Christmas day, between them in death as in life, the white man's face.

They placed him upon the poor couch and left her beside him there, alone—her head bowed above the arm, powerless now the arm that had struck her the last blow she would ever feel again.

The day wore quietly away. She was tired—very tired—she heard the small clock hoarsely saying: "There-and-back-there-and-back"—and with that sound droning drowsily she slept.

By-and-by Biggs' wife came down, and with officious neighbourly kindness bustling about, called to a man sitting upon the log stoop without—

"Come, Dave, we must wake her—come ben man."

But when they called, it was to ears that heard not; Liz was dead. The end had come."

A Butterfly.

This bonny wee thing I spied one morn
When the North wind played with the prairie clover,
It lightly sped from flower to flower
And fluttered by each, such a scornful rover ;
And I said " I'll 'prison you, thoughtless thing,
You remind me of one—my heartless lover."

The fluttering, frail and delicate web—
Like/thing so touched my sorrow,
That upon a light and fragile wing
It went, to sip new sweets to-morrow ;
But the prairie floss and the bloom-robbed flower
Bowed low, some human pity to borrow.

Away to the West shone a glittering thing
That bent and waved in that perfumed foray,
Pearl bright and radiant on it went,
And I sighed "'Tis a page of that old, old story "
(The rose grew pale and the floss sad bowed)
" Some touch of pain must tinge all glory "

The Light of Other Days.

A STORY OF THE REBELLION AND AFTER.

The shrill-tongued bell above Haddam's mill was loudly and querulously jangling at the early hour of five o'clock one morning. As yet the buzz from the big round saw, glittering and sharp of tooth, was but an angry hum. The logs from the spring drive floated upon the Shallows, hugged shorewards by the boom limit which reached along the beach to the upper wharf.

The pretty town of Daltonby straggled up a hill side; broad streets that reached from the water's edge in two belts that seemed to bind the houses down, crept countryward over the hill-top, where Carter's Fields lay, a maze of verdure where nut trees grew in confused tangle, and in their season raspberry bushes crimsoned the fence line.

At the first sound of the mill-bell specks seemed to rise from various points along the hill-side, rise, and in the grey-white dawn seemed to float shorewards. They grew into shapes as they advanced—human shapes. There were old men with older faces, boyish frames with oldish bent heads; old, not with the count of time, but of care, and white with the dew of want.

These last had never known childhood. They had been born into the Daltonby world with no object in life beyond the week-day round of toil; no alternative but work, ceaseless work. Their young shoulders bent under the heavy load—existence.

Haddam's mill the school whereat life's lessons were learned; Haddam's mill the playground where never a boyish laugh was heard; Haddam's mill with its whirling, whirring wheels; its glittering saws set in a shining row, that spun round madly all day long, fed by logs slippery and dank; that bit into the timber and cut into the hearts of the old men, and the men who looked old, but were young in days; cut into the

hearts of boy men struggling under the heavy slabs upon their poor lean shoulders whereon a leather pad lay protecting the flesh. Through the lumber piles they went as some of them had gone for forty years.

Haddam senior, was there this morning. There with his keen eye. Judds, the "tally-man" was taking down the men's time and he saw that Denovy was late again. Judds gave a remonstrative glance reluctantly shutting the time book with Denovy's name unrecorded there. This meant docking, and docking meant serious things for a man having a family double the size of his wages, covering, feeding and housing them, a problem beyond all known rules of mathematical calculation, every effort to make a balance between income and expenses being thwarted by Mrs. Denovy, a freckled-faced brisk little body, who, being "a poor hand" at calculation, brought with provoking regularity a new baby into existence each year, with no concern at all as to whether such human atom was necessary, not to say welcome. Indeed a rash start was made in the early days of Denovy's married life, when, in one of the awful storms that smote the Shallows twelve years before, the ship *Annetta* went to pieces on Bon-Ami's rocks, and many poor distracted faces went down while the sibilant sea sang its cruel song. The mill hands rescued a young woman, her child lashed to her bosom, from the foam wreathed rocks, good hearted Denovy taking both home to his bright fire-side where in wild delirium wild calls to "Dilly!" "Dilly!" puzzled the simple folk; she was calling to her husband who, no doubt had gone down with the many, and the only other surviving passenger, rescued in an exhausted condition and having a description given him of the woman and child, remembered seeing her with her husband, a fellow passenger. He with great kindness provided for the unknown woman widowed in that awful hour. This gentleman was taken to Cozydean where he remained the guest of John Haddam while Mary Denovy nursed back to strength the bereaved woman.

After a time John Haddam's guest left for the Canadian West. The Honorable Dilraven Toft, as he proved to be, having provided for the burial of his fated fellow passenger, whose death was hourly expected.

The fever spent itself, and the stranger lying in Denovy's cabin opened her eyes for one bewildering moment to see Mary Denovy crooning over a babe in coarse garments. Some pent emotion swept on her mind, and with that remembrance a flood of grief. Then Mary, who had the

motherly instinct and the capacity for love that is a part of it, placed the child upon her bosom and heard the wild cry of joy.

"Ah, my own ! not dead ; not dead ! His father ?" she cried catching Mary by the arm, "His father ?" Denovy's wife could only sob and shake her head sadly, then put her arms in loving sympathy about the stricken creature and whisper words of comfort and tearful consolation.

Then she told of the "kind gentleman who had provided,"—Mary hesitated—"to send her back to her friends."

"The name?" She could not remember, "but Miss Gracie would know. Denovy 'ud soon be back from the mill, aye, she remembered now, it was Honorable Mr. Toft—that was what Lawyer Windsor called him ; he knowed her man—knowed he'd gone down, an' when he left for the West—aye, he'd gone to the Nor'West"—

The woman repeated "Gone—gone to the West"—clasping and unclasping her thin hands, rocking her shaven head from side to side and tears flowing down the wan face. By and bye she sat up ; she used to stand in the door and look down to where the Shallows ebbed and flowed "like human hopes ;" she said "hopes that dashed and broke upon the rocks, the grey, cold rocks, that were like human hearts."

She 'wandered about the beach, and upon the wet sands, always gazing westward. One day she went down and never came back. There was a great commotion among the mill hands, who conjured up various theories about the silent woman, but they had their daily duties, those hard-worked simple folk, and they said : "She've gone wi' her man," looking seawards, and they shook their heads solemnly and asked each other "whatever 'ud come be the bairn now?" but Denovy kept the bairn, and the clangle-jangle of the mill bell put a stop to further question.

Denovy complacently accepted this care, noting, in a dull sort of way, as the years brought like additions, that a relative subtraction in means resulted, warping his wages and temper, notwithstanding his wife's comforting assurance that "Proverdenche 'ud pervide."

So it was that Denovy—making his annual trip to Granny Tucker to secure her professional services in a neighborly way—went late to his day's work, and, as we have said, was docked a half-day's pay.

Docked a half-day's pay for being twenty-five minutes late is not conducive to one's best energies. Denovy put in that day without much effort. His mind had another fraction to add to the daily problem :

"Fourteen hours labor for six days at six shillings a day (not counting docking) gives thirty-six shillings, ten months to fill three times a day for *seven* days—two hundred and ten. Two hundred and ten into thirty-six?"

The whirr of the wheels ceased suddenly with a snarling sort of compliance with the shriek sent out by the steam whistle; a reluctant admission the day's work was over; an enraged whoop, it seemed coming out of the dead silence that followed the stoppage of whirling wheels.

There was shuffling of heavy feet; a general picking up of empty dinner pails, then they went away in solemn file, old men and young men with old faces; went their way silently, stupidly; winding their way up the hill side, or straggling off into by paths beyond the town.

Denovy, followed by Jem and Jerry, went up the hill side road past the Kirk, his smock thrown over one shoulder. On his left stood Cozy-dean, his master's handsome home, surrounded by well laid out grounds, where arbors and trellis work of vines veiled the rambling house, which showed through the whited palings of a high fence, enchanted, but to the mill hands, forbidden grounds. And the seeds of bitterness and hate began to grow in Denovy's heart.

Why should one man own all yonder grandeur? Wasn't it the sweat, now dropping from his own brow, that watered you trailing vines and sleek lawns? An imprecation was on his lips, but, softly, his own name was called, and he looked up and saw a small white hand beckoning from the fence chinks. Then a golden mass of curls came into view above the fence top, and a smile like a sunburst swept the angry gloom from the man's sullen heart.

One pretty arm was curled around a paling, the chin resting on a dimpled wrist, while two blue eyes looked over, and she whispered:—

"I've been up to your place, and oh, Denovy! there's *such* a surprise for you there!"

And Denovy, his heart uneasy between fear and anxiety, looked anxiously back the road he had come, and said, with a sigh.—

"Thank ye Miss Gracie! The misses 'ud take yer visit kindly"—

"Oh, but Granny Tucker didn't," said Miss Gracie making a big round O of her beautiful eyes, "she sent me away, flying—I didn't see Mary at all, but Denovy, if you leave Jem and Jerry with me until to-

morrow, we'll have a regular time of it, diving for apples in the pump-trough; and Denovy," (leaning over confidentially) "did—you—see—*anybody* to-day?"

She perched the golden head on one side waiting with parted lips to hear the answer, but Denovy only shook his head in a way that might have said no, or might have meant deeper things.

Jem would not venture within the gates of Cozydean, but Jerry fearlessly crept under the big barred barrier, and confidently gave his lean hard hand to Miss Gracie, while Denovy stepped out for Carter's Fields with energy. Now for home and the surprise there waiting him.

He began again the old unsolvable problem, adding another fraction to the debit side, the mere thought of the 'surprise' sending the credit balance altogether out of sight.

Denovy reached the door of his home, and was there met by Dame Tucker bearing, not another heir to nothing at all, but a pair of 'em!

This seemed the last straw. He dropped his dinner pail and stared unbelievably. Why, heaven alone could tell whether Mary Denovy intended this as a final and triumphant proof of exhausted abilities, or a tangible threat that she was about to begin to double previous efforts? Denovy was awakened to a sense of the benefits conferred upon him by Granny Tucker's ministrations of sympathy.

"An' indeed it's Bumbleton's theirselves as 'ud give half their prop'ity, monymment an'all fer the likes of 'em! so they would. But Bumbleton's woman wi' all her airs ain't on'y a poor coot!" Old Granny held up the twins to their bewildered parent. Pink as fresh-cooked salmon, bony fists like claws that now 'squared off' in the most encouraging way, as if to demonstrate their honest intention of fighting their way through the unwelcoming world. "Look at!" chuckles the old nurse drawing down the frayed flannel enveloping the midguts. "Look at! shure'n it 'ul be no time 'tull they be's a-follerin' daddy 't mill, ay, an' airnin' wi' the best on 'em."

Denovy sighed heavily. Yes, there was the mill. The big wheels had whirled their ceaseless hum into the man's brain. The scr—rr— of the saws sent a shudder through to the quick of his heart, his thought spun out with resistless force—

"Curse the mill! It's wheels turn on the life-blood of us—the heart's blood!"

From an adjoining room came a wailing remonstrance.

"There you go again man! the mill! the mill! A body 'ud think ye' wasn't a whit thankful t' the A'mi't'y for 'em; and me here a lyin' o' no more consckense nor I wasn't just come through the gates a' death a fetchin' 'em t'ye!"

Roused to a sense of his annual duty, Denovy stepped into the next room. His wife was there surrounded by skeleton children; her hard, seemed hands resting with loving touch upon wee Laddie's brown curls; Laddie was sleeping soundly after a long day's romp.

Mary Denovy smiled up in the face so thoughtfully sad, so eloquently silent. For poor Denovy read in the patient glance lying there—want, hunger. "Have ye' had your supper, man?"

"I—don't think I want any, Lass," he said, bending over to lift the sleeping child, still clinging to his deposed sovereignty as "mother's baby." "Put him in Jerry's bed" whispered the mother with a tired failing of the voice, "Miss Gracie's come here, and took him away; eh, man, she's none of the Haddam blood, she's a Bloomsbury in the heart."—

"Mith Drathie fethed mammy dyam, an' wine!" lisped a wee urchin curling its bare limbs about the bed-post and smacking its lips greedily in delightful remembrance.

Dame Tucker's voice was now heard above the creaking wooden rocker: "What's ten on em? I knowed a family at Campbellford as 'dopted six on 'em, one a-top of another; his wife bein' a poor coot as never fetched him none, an' the 'hul on 'em up an' dies, jest along of contrairiness."

Little Marty had placed her father's supper on the table; the herring steamed from a crater of hot potatoes, but instead of sitting down with Rory on his knee—it being Rorie's high office to 'pick out the bons's for father'—Denovy went outside, and tipping his hat back, sat down beside the door, and sighing heavily, let his glance drift townwards.

The night dew was falling. From the river a cloud-like mist crept shorewards, above it the high chimney of the mill rose a dark shadow that seemed to weight and darken everything.

Denovy's thoughts were heavy. Man and boy he had worked there, ever since he could remember, among the slabs and sawdust. The only fresh thing down there was the yellow-brown dulce that floated in patches among the logs. The logs were slimy.

The lights from the town shone tremblingly through the mist. The man's eyes roamed across to where the "big house" stood. There a big blaze of light shone out. There was a "shindy" at Cozydean. Marks' wife had been called in to do chores, and Marks had that day told the mill hands of the "goings on":—

"That ther' swell chap as nigh drowned was cum from out West—old' man's brother kept a ranche out yander; swell chap was a-visitin' ol' man; hed bin over sea—an' if ol' man couldn't hev high jinks, who could? Them as has money t' pay the piper kin dance."

Then Russ, a surly fellow who had lost an arm feeding the saws, and who, in consequence of a cut in the wages on that account, and "had it in" for "somebody," said:—

"The heart's blood of us boys makes fine fat for them sort!"

Denovy had laughed boisterously then, and now the memory of Russ's words came back, and he laughed, laughed while he wiped away the tears.

"Come ben man!"

Was it something in the call, or was it the chill from the heavy dew that made the man shiver? A wail, commingled with the cry of children! To the ears of the bewildered man the sound seemed like the ser—rr—r of the saws, the clamping of the logs in the lift. He found himself within the house, and before he stood by the poor couch where Mary Denovy lay, he knew that his wife was dead.

Granny Tucker was weeping, wildly declaiming:—"Niver no signs of death! On'y a pinchin' up of the white face; an' me, knowin' as how a drop do be fer rousin' a body, I turns to get Miss Grace's wine, an' when I comes to lass wi' a drop, es I tasted be yon door, I ketches her eye on me speakin' like; she med a bit shiver like she was cold, an' went out like an' ower-pinched can'le!"

Denovy made no sign. He sat alone all night by his dead, and did not seem to heed even the early morning mill bell that filled the small house with its querulous jangle.

About noon Miss Gracie, leading Jerry, who had by some occult means become a "gentleman" appeared, Jerry in a neat black suit, his sleeve having a crape band for the dead woman, who had been mother to him always. In Miss Gracie's hands was a bunch of flowers, flowers as white as the pallid brow of the dead woman; flowers that gave to

the shabby room a new shame, and breathed a fragrance that touched the heart of the mourner there. Denovy wept.

The next day, Russ, one-armed but sympathetic, and aided by Marks, turned the screws in poor Mary Denovy's coffin; and as many of the mill "hands" as were willing to lose half a day's pay, came to walk with their stricken mate down the hill to the only resting place poor Mary had ever known. The small procession formed silently, and Denovy, with Jerry and Jim following the coffin out into the sunshine, saw young Haddam, his master's son, seated in his natty carriage, driving into position to join the ranks afoot. Mad with his own grief and pain, Denovy leaped to the carriage side, shaking his knotted hands, and with curses that awed all, ordered him away, lest he should kill him, "kill, as he and his had done"—"yelling," as Dame Tucker confided to her next case, "like any hyenner!"

From the small-paned window, Gracie saw the man's mad rush, saw her cousin drive away, and, clasping together distressed small hands, she whispered to Granny Tucker (who was at once trying to comfort the twins, threatening Tim and Rory who were wailing in concert, and solemnly telling Marty she "mus' be mother now"):—"Oh, Granny! it was I made Townley come! I coaxed him to come, and now Denovy has driven him away!"

"Aye!" grumbles the old nurse, "some bodies be that bliu' they swaps the'r porridge fer a spit."

Of Denovy it was soon said he was "a bit wantin'." He said he could not get the sound of the mill wheels out of his brain; so to drown the same, poor Denovy began to stop at Mority's grog shop on his way home from the mill, then he began to find his way there at noon, and the dinner pail often came home untouched, until one morning, on the anniversary of poor Mary's death, when bitter memories mingled and poisoned the sweet, the poor fellow, who had lingered longer than usual, at his stopping place, sullen and silently picked up his slab, conscious that Haddam's hard eye was on his unsteady step.

"Discharge that man Denovy," John Haddam said to his foreman, turning away with frowning brow.

Denovy heard the order and his face darkened. The day had begun badly; it went on worse, the shoot would clog; the band would slip off the big wheel, and Jowks swore loudly that "unless Chap minded his eggs, e'd find hisself short a-marketin' 'em!"

Denovy, dizzy with the drink, a spare breakfast, the big wheel thundering; a thousand spokes whirling; the band revolving about the wheels a blinding blur; the crunch of the lift bearing the dank logs on, like giant arms reaching towards him; the swiftly whirling teeth cutting into the timber bit at him; they snarled; the ser--rr of the saws in his ears; the belt slips again--Jowks looks up with a scowl. Denovy leaps forward to replace it; a bit of frayed sleeve (which, had Mary Jived had been neatly mended) catches in the whirling wheel. *Christ have mercy!*

Marks turned angrily to see who it was had struck him? He met Jowk's hell-lit eyes, and something in the awful glance caught his own and carried it up, up, until it is fixed on *something* that goes round and round and round with the wheel, then falls with awful thud between the two men.

The thousand noises cease. They gather about the broken form in terrible silence; they touch his neglected and matted hair; they turn their men's faces away and cry women's tears; they stripped themselves to cover his bruised and naked body, and while they looked they sobbed aloud.

Denovy had indeed got his discharge!

Upon the sawdust lay poor Denovy, dead! Over his mangled form the shrunken faces of Jem and Jerry hung--tearless. There was no child's grief there; their hearts were old--old with the count of care.

CHAPTER II.

The drawing-room at Hazlecopse was lighted by a handsome chandelier, which threw a tinted glow over a group of female figures gathered in serious consultation. Mrs. Bloomsbury, seated in an easy chair, which was gorgeously upholstered with bright yellow plush, appeared like a great luminous body, while the flaxen heads of her daughters (known to friends as the Bloomsbury girls) shone at her knee. However, on the face of the elder lady there was a cloud, a nebulous tinge, showing some disturbing action at work within, and which appeared to affect the corona as well, for, as they knelt there, they frequently sighed.

"And, after all," Mrs. Bloomsbury was saying, "after all your papa has done for them; building up and sustaining the business; managing the mill; slaving to keep things going, taking upon himself all the anxiety and care; and now, *now*, when the worst comes, your uncle seems quite disposed to — to —."

Here the inner disturbing action found vent in the discharge of two big tears that gathered, hung for a moment, then as it were, with a splash broke upon the lace flounces of her handsome gown.

At the sight of the tears two flaxen heads immediately rose, and four blue eyes were fixed on the rubicund visage of the tearful Mrs. Bloomsbury.

"It can't hurt papa, can it?" asked Carrie, who added, in a lower tone, without altering her anxious gaze: "And mamma dear, your nose is getting red!"

"Hurt your papa?" repeated Mrs. Bloomsbury, "it will *ruin* him!"

At this, a sudden plunge into cambric folds caused a partial eclipse, whereby the corona maintained but a diffracted glow —

"The mill, the stores, the bank, *everything* is liable to execution. But thank heaven!" sobbed Mrs. Bloomsbury, piously, "thank heaven! your papa has always been said by *me*; we may," she gurgled, "lose our business *prestige*, and some property left unprotected, but we shan't lose our social standing. *Hazlecopse is secured to me!*"

A satisfied sigh from the Misses Bloomsbury was cut short by the entrance of one, easily recognized as the sister of the two girls at the feet of their mother. It was a face full of happy youth; she had buoyancy of step which seemed in strong contrast to the languor observable in her sisters, who asked: "Why, Grace! where have you been all evening?"

"I have been up at Denovy's," she answered, seating herself beside her mamma. "Do you know those babies grow skinnier every day. They'll die, mamma; I'm sure they'll die unless ———."

"Shocking!" exclaimed the two sisters in concert. "Grace Bloomsbury!" broke in the elder lady, throwing herself back with a gesture of horror and severity, "Where do you get your low tastes? Why will you persist in visiting the mill hands? One thing I have done. I've put a stop to that ragged child, Jerry, coming about the place, and I now forbid you making any more visits to those low places."

"Dear me! I hope it is not fever they've got!" said Elegantina shuddering prettily, and moving across the room.

"No," said Gracie, a tremor in her voice, "its only hunger, neglect and"—she paused, as a distant sound of the door bell, violently rung, was heard, "I washed them both—I've done it lots of times, mamma," as Mrs. Bloomsbury, horror in her glance, raised both hands and ejaculated:—

"You are just like your Aunt Cicily; poking about in all sorts of places."

"Poor Aunt Cissy," sighed Gracie, folding her arms and leaning, thoughtfully over, "I was down at Cozydean to-day mamma, and they all seemed so sad. Uncle Haddam had gone to Campellford, mamma, and Aunt Cissy feels sure that it is some new trouble."

"Cicily is void of feeling," snapped Mrs. Bloomsbury, standing up and shaking out a shower of lace flounces that rose and fell in a sort of indignant flutter. "I remember well," went on the lady, "the time I bought my maroon curtains; she said they were expensive, she thought. Expensive! It was sheer jealousy! She wasted twice that sum in dressing up that wretched Jerry, and I'm sure Tom Windsor was just nagged in to taking him, though, dear knows, he'll never earn much law from Tom."

The sentence was never finished, for the drawing-room door opened suddenly and unsteadily, and Townley Haddam, very much flushed, and, for that usually exquisite young man, disordered in general appearance, walked, or more truthfully, rolled in.

"Townley!"

This was ejaculated in four different keys. Mrs. Bloomsbury a bass note in which anger and rage were apparent; Carrie gasped it in a convulsive staccato; Elegancia with cold disdain; while Gracie, cowering there upon her low seat, her eyes big with agonized fear, lacing her small fingers nervously, parted her lips and called his name in a blending of love and sorrow.

Townley was swaying unsteadily, gazing about him in a vague sort of way, as if wondering whether there might be somebody else to blink at? He stood there without speaking, neither had he removed his hat, which in defiance of all laws of politeness or gravity perilously poised just above one ear. He sank into a seat with a smile that was extremely silly but generously included the whole room.

"Wha 'r y' all dancin' 'bout f'r?" he demanded gloomily frowning, "kee' still! Can' coun' ye'—wha' r' y' dancin' f'r?"

Now Mrs. Bloomsbury considered she had already born a good deal that day. It will be conceded that this untimely appearance of any member of the offending family was exasperating and under such circumstances doubly offensive.

"Oh—hh!" Mrs. Bloomsbury gasped, surveying her nephew, whose whole appearance betokened unregenerate dissipation; maudlin sentiment and rank admiration in the wabby eye now fixed on Gracie, who was twisting her fingers together helplessly and sending a pleading glance from her mamma to Townley, and from Townley back to her mamma. That astute lady, interposing her ample form between the eye of her nephew and its trembling object, now burst forth:—

"I am astonished! *astonished* Mr. Haddam, that you should have the audacity to—to appear in—in my presence in this state of—of—of"—

Townley, waved his arms with a zig-zag motion as, if wafting his aunt altogether out of view, and taking suddenly a new and dangerous angle in order to regain a view of Grace, hiccupped: "O! girl g' ow 'way—don' wan t'see an'ybo'y bu' Gracie." Poor Gracie herself tearful and distressed was edging her way to the side of this very unbecoming young man, but was promptly checked by her mamma's eye.

"Disgraceful!" panted that lady, gathering her daughters Carrie and Elegancia, now fluttering like frightened chicks, about her, leaving Gracie standing apart, twisting and wringing her small fingers in anguish. Mrs. Bloomsbury, like an alarmed hen gathered her brood, half leading, half driving them from the room, now closed the doors upon them, and turning upon her nephew an enraged eye, folded her arms and stood. Townley was smiling sillily at nothing at all; smiling vacantly, and with apparent relish receiving the storm which now broke upon his unsteady head.

"You and your people," panted Mrs. Bloomsbury, "bringing this disgrace upon me and mine! Your father dabbling in politics, and your mother with her come-day-go-day-God-send-Sunday, until," went on the irate lady emphasizing her words by nods until her cap-ribbons seemed to become infected by her agitation, "at last we are brought to such a pass that our—our—our"—

"W'isk'y," blandly suggested Townley, wishing to assist his relative, his inward cogitations being probably along that line of thought.

This was the last straw. Mrs. Bloomsbury, choking with rage, furiously rang a bell at hand, and before the maid had time to appear stalked from the room, passing Gracie, who crouched unobserved behind the velvet portierre, where, bathed in grief, she had listened to the tirade against the offending Townley. She now stole quietly in, and going over to the side of her cousin, who was dimly conscious of her presence, she rained sad tears down upon his unworthy head.

This was, to Townley in his maudlin state, a sort of comic pantomime. He had a vague idea of "catching it," but was not altogether certain whether it was his sweetheart, standing beside him, or a hourie of more ample proportions that had been rating him.

"Too har' n a fella'," he said, blinking up at his cousin helplessly.

"O!" sobbed Gracie, "didn't you—prom-ise—me never—never to touch"—

"Nev'r will," avers Townley, "s' 'elp me—blaz's."

"O!" whispered his cousin wiping a wet eye with the tip of one small pink finger, "if you only wouldn't!"

"Won't," says Townley straightening himself up, half in the determination to begin to reform on the spot, and half in fear that an approaching footstep was that of his aunt "won't ev'r again;" this with a

fearful frown "bu' I say little wi—I mean Gracie—I—say, ain't she a—a Tar'ar?"

"Who?" asked Gracie, beginning to smile through her tears (for the appearance of a gentleman with sentiment and brandy struggling for the mastery is ridiculous in the extreme), "why, there is mud all over your hat, you've got somebody else's coat on, and—yes, you've been drinking—wine!" and the little lady curled one small hand up in the larger but shaking hand of Townley and threatened with a disengaged digit, declaring in a little rill of sobs "*if ever*" something lost in the folds of a coat collar, but that had a wonderful effect. Townley ceased smiling, he even looked solemn, then he frowned fiercely, declaring "he didn't care that moment whether the whole"—A pink hand across his lips lost the rest of the sentence, and little Gracie fell a-weeping and into caressing arms, while Townley vowed, as he had so often vowed before, 'to be good forever!'

To this scene, Katey the little maid, became a witness. Katey's sympathies were entirely with Miss Gracie, but having been charged a moment before to "go to the drawing-room and put that monster out," the little maid discreetly withdrew, opening the door a second time, and noisily entering. "I'll run and bring up a cup of strong coffee, Miss," whispered that wise little body, taking in at a glance the situation. She disappeared in great haste, and soon returned with a steaming cup. Then she busied herself about the room, arranging the various pieces of furniture, and sharply cocked a cunning ear for possible footfalls.

So it was that Mrs. Bloomsbury, after a furious declaration of war down stairs, giving her nephew time to leave the premises, returning to the drawing-room to cool off her mind, was aghast to find there not only her nephew, but her nephew being entertained by her daughter, who was lecturing Townley with much vigor, a small finger remonstratively lively, and Townley blinking gravely while he made a feint of catching the threatening hand, and whenever a pause in the mild harrangue occurred, declaring meekly "nev'r t' do 't ag'n s'elp m' bla'z's—"

"Great stars and garters!" shrieked Mrs. Bloomsbury, raising both fat arms in an abandonment of rage.

Gracie hung her head, and seeing her mother's eyes raised, deftly pushed the empty coffee-cup, which was upon the carpet standing, out of sight, while Katey the guilty accomplice fled abruptly. Townley,

sobered by the coffee, uneasily but blandly extended a hand to his aunt and was assuring her with flattering, but untimely assertion, "Grace's a reg'lar brick! on'y one cares f'r a f'la?" remarking with terrible earnestness, "would go t' dev'l a'l'ger'er if 't wa'n't f'r Gra'ie," and caught Miss Gracie within his arms then and there, before the horror-wide eyes of his aunt, and savagely "dar'd an' one—*an' one t' sep'rat'*" them. Mrs. Bloomsbury, by an adroit movement, placed herself between the cousins, sternly ordering her daughter to her own room and putting her nephew to rout; this she did in a double charge explosive and determined, the while she followed him to the street door, and as he passed beyond the entrance to Hazelpopse and disappeared in the gloom, Mrs. Bloomsbury, with a laugh that had no mirth in it at all, shrilly observed:

"There he goes to resume his bacchanalian revels! Like father, like son! To be seen going from my house in that beastly state!" Here Mrs. Bloomsbury became sepulchral: "Never again shall Townley Haddam enter my door! *Never!*"

Perritt Bloomsbury's mind was occupied by matters more serious than those disturbing his wife's thoughts. That evening he returned absent-minded "yes, yes's" to all that lady confided during the process of disrobing. Tortured by the knowledge that John Haddam, his trusted partner, had ——— Great God! was the man he called *brother*, the man he had trusted a——

Mrs. Bloomsbury, the while her husband struggled with serious, puzzling, mental complications, in a frilled night-cap and seated on the edge of the high posted bedstead, was giving in tiresome detail the story of Townley's offence, as related; she had reached the culminating point in her recitative, where, having discovered the coffee-cup, she learned the full extent of Gracie's crime.

"There it was," said Mrs. Bloomsbury dramatically, "there it was, under his chair, where she had wickedly shoved it out of sight with her toe!"

"He never did it," murmured Mr. Bloomsbury, looking past his wife in a dazed sort of way.

"Why of course he did'nt do it" cried Mrs. B. shrilly, standing up in ghostly garments, and surveying her husband "*she* did it herself; pushed it out of sight with her toe!" and suiting the word by a like motion of her own pedal, nearly lost her balance, only saving herself by

grabbing the high poster, thereby jarring her husband into recognition of her presence.

He laughed good naturedly enough, as with a tremendous "pwooh" the lamp was extinguished, "oh! you women, you women, with your fiddle-faddle squabbles!"

"Squabbles!" mimicked Mrs. B. an octave higher than her usual recitative, as with one fat leg poised, she hesitated in the act of stepping into bed. The frills on her night cap quivered, her eyes, big and round staring through the gloom to where her husband lay. "Squabbles! when your own child's future—her absolute *honour* is at stake! Do you know Mr. Bloomsbury?" quoth she plunging into feathers "that, that scamp and — and your daughter are engaged?" This with a flourish of the arm that was oratory and comfort combined, for Mrs. Bloomsbury felt indignation rising even as she felt the night's chill settling, and she drew the warm comforter of wool about her shoulders.

"Who—what are you talking about?" demanded Mr. Bloomsbury, a little annoyed at having his thoughts disturbed.

"Who—am—I—talking—about?" repeated his wife, so parrot-like, so tauntingly, so belligerently, it roused all the irritability latent in him. With a movement characteristic of the male mind determined not to be dragged into argument, he gave a swirl of the bed drapery, facing the wall in that movement and presented to Mrs. Bloomsbury a back as immovable as the fortification of China. This, Mrs. Bloomsbury accepted as a declaration of war, and she fired a first shot, squarely aimed, which took immediate effect.

"What a fine father!" sneered Mrs. B.

"Go to sleep Mrs. B.," urged the wall.

"Sleep!" jeered Mrs. Bloomsbury, "Sleep! when my own child's honour is at stake! No, Mr. Bloomsbury I shan't sleep!"

"What the devil do you want *me* to do about it?" demanded Mr. Bloomsbury, seeing his wife was not to be put off.

"Oh, nothing! nothing Mr. B.," retorts the lady with a laugh that was not only unnatural but blood-curdling. "*Nothing at all*; she's only your own flesh and blood, there's no reason at all for you to agitate your fatherly mind; none at all!"

This was effectual. Mr. Bloomsbury let down his drawbridge, or in other words turned his face to his wife, prepared to learn full particulars whereby his daughter's happiness was jeopardized, and said: "Now my dear, what have the young people done; what about this coffee business and how is Townley mixed up in it at all?" Mr. Bloomsbury listened for a reply and gaining none, he went on:

"I say, my dear," (this in a conciliatory key) "I am much bothered by business worries just now, and"—

"And have no time" snapped his wife "to look after your family!" immediately lapsing into silence, out of which, regardless of repeated appeals, she utterly refused to be brought into further conversation. She had succeeded in rousing him out of his lethargic reverie; she had brought him to a point of excited curiosity; *she had conquered*: and now Mrs. Bloomsbury could sleep!

The brain of Mrs. Bloomsbury's husband was now so confused, so tingling with congested thought, disordered thought, that sleep was out of the question. He lay wakeful and disturbed, while that lady calmly reposed, her satisfied mind a serene blank, the day's anxieties gone; the sorrows of her perturbed soul swept away on the sea of oblivion, she slept the sleep of a fully satisfied feminine mind. She had broken into that of her husband.

The events of the past two days rose up in a haphazard violent way in Perritt Bloomsbury's mind; a confused commingling of bank notes, and a blur of faces before his hot eye-balls. The face of his partner and friend, John Haddam, white, drawn, agonized; Townley, his face a vacant stare,—while a flood of shame swept over that boyish face where early dissipation had traced hard lines. Then the package lying upon the desk in the inner office, *where no one save John Haddam and his son had access*. Where was it? Then with a suddenness that almost made him laugh aloud, so grotesque it seemed, a coffee cup would dance before his distorted vision, while his wife's warning words about Gracie's honor added to his troubled soul new woe.

In his weariness he gave a deep sigh; Perritt Bloomsbury had always thought that Townley would prove equal to taking over the vast and increasing business of "Haddam Bloomsbury and Co." Here the man's mind went off on a canter: Townley and Townley's disappointing ways grew with fearful and persistent reality. Townley *had* disappointed

them all. He was wild. Someway since the Honorable Dilraven Toft appeared he had become more reckless. The Honorable Dilraven Toft had certainly not done Townley any harm; a most proper young gentleman and heir to an earldom. He was really troubled about Townley's ways but could that be out of any selfish idea? Was beautiful Barbara Haddam in the honorable gentleman's mind? Why linger at Daltonby? He had been rescued at Daltonby, where the Anneta went down—his life had been saved there—and gratitude made Daltonby dear to him. He had his ranches and his landed interests out West—why linger at Daltonby unless—then the troubled thought arose, would the crash of the firm of Haddam, Bloomsbury and Co. affect any *serious* intention of the titled gentleman. Would the fact that his prospective father-in-law was a *thief*—"Perritt Bloomsbury groaned aloud. "If he would only tell me—only tell me," he murmured, "that he spent it on those damned elections, he *knows* I'd say"—

"*Knows you'd say what, Perritt?*"

"Dear me! dear me!" ejaculated that startled gentleman, "did I speak my dear?"

"You've been speaking the entire night," averred Mrs. Bloomsbury, regardless of veracity, "and now," she added, flopping over so as to face her husband, "I must hear all about this Haddam business, for I *know* John Haddam, with his chase after political honors is at the bottom of the trouble."

Perritt Bloomsbury gravely considered a moment—then with a seriousness which rather alarmed, than satisfied his wife, he began: "You see, my dear, it has been going on a very long time"—

"What's been going on?" demanded Mrs. B., beginning to feel resentment at being kept in ignorance of important matters.

"Why the—the"—stammered her husband coming to a full stop, and debating within himself, whether, after all he ought to allow his partner to appear in so ill a light as the facts of the case showed him.

"Do you expect me to see into your mind and understand what is buried there?" demanded Mrs. B. "Can I discover what you are thinking about?"

"God bless me!" burst out her husband, "Do you want me to tell you, or do you not?"

This gave Mrs. Bloomsbury a hint that by caution more was to be gained, so she held her offended dignity well in hand, and with a mighty sigh cocked both ears for the story.

"You see," said Perritt Bloomsbury, "it began about the time of the last election. Haddam lost interest in the business, or, at least, he began to let things slide. Then he put Townley at the desk, and as you know my dear, Townley is a little—wild.

Mrs. Bloomsbury inwardly determined to send Gracie to Aunt Bilge at Frederickton, and, lost in the calculation of what wardrobe alterations would be necessary by this move, missed some of her husband's monologue. However, her ear caught the name of "The Honorable Diraven Toft," and she interpolated: "As sure as you live, Perritt, Barbara will throw over Tom Windsor and marry Toft."

"Well, my dear, I've been thinking things were shaping that way. Roger writes that he is very well liked out West, and likely to stand for the Commons,"—adding, "unless this mystery of the" ————

"What?" interrupted his wife.

Then the story came out:—

Ten days before, and on the very day John Haddam was so pressed for money to meet his election expenses, the bills of Faraday, Faraday & Co. fell due, and a package of \$20,000 had been made up by the partners themselves, and Townley was entrusted with the carrying of this package, securely sealed, on board the boat *Rothsay Castle*. Townley admitted seeing the package upon the desk. He went out, leaving the two partners together in the office; spent the night at Inch Arran, and went down early in the following day to execute his trust. While in the office his father came in and began to upbraid him for his habits; they became involved in a heated conversation, and Townley went out—with the package, his father said, but Townley had no recollection of having taken it. He admits having drunk heavily the night before, and, in fact, went back to get a soda to pull himself together. He knows nothing further about the money. He thought his father ————."

"Of course, he stole it," summed up Mrs. Bloomsbury, with judicial promptitude, "and he ought to be hanged!"

"He never said aye or nay," said Perritt Bloomsbury sadly; that's what hurts me. If he would only own that his political expenses cornered him. Why, dash it!" said the excited man, "what's twice twenty thousand dollars between friends?"

"Twenty thous- - — ?" Mrs. Bloomsbury raised herself until her night-capped head balanced upon an elbow. Then she uttered "Nah!" in a sound between a gasp and a groan, and, with a look of malignity, sank back upon her pillow.

"Then, Perritt," she said with solemn distinctness, "it is your duty, *as a father*, to see that that scamp is "———"

"What duty are you talking about? and what scamp do you mean, my dear?" asked Perritt Bloomsbury tartly; "You don't suppose I'm going to have my sister's husband tried as a common thief, do you?"

"Well," retorted the lady, "you may set no store by your money, or your business, but I hope you *do* consider you daughter's happiness, and that you will at once bring this farce of an engagement to an end."

"But, my dear, how will Gracie "———"

"Must do better than marry a pauper!" broke in Mrs. Bloomsbury, hotly.

"I must confess," said the bothered man, "that Townley has rather disappointed me; still"—— His kindly heart was racked by the thought that his child might suffer by an attempt at breaking off what had ever been considered an amicable family compact. He knew Gracie loved her cousin, and he had hoped her influence would in time bring the boy, clever but wild, to a sense of his position. He should succeed to the business —— This with a shock, for by some intuitive instinct an avalanche of words struck the exact tone of his troubled mind.

"Business!" urged the lady, "and now that you see there is no dependence to be placed on father or son, it is your *duty* Perritt, your duty to put a stop to this nonsense."

Mr. Bloomsbury made faint resistance, holding out that some consideration should be shown in what so nearly concerned the happiness of the two young people, urging as a slightly severe reminder, that Mrs. Bloomsbury herself had rather encouraged Townley, and was over ruled by arguments, and such arguments pinned by ugly but convincing terms in which "robber" "thief" made weighty considerations, leaving him nothing but complete submission to a superior will.

So it was that Gracie's fate was sealed while she slept a happy sleep, lightly dream-touched, and kindly unconsciousness made such dreams a joy.

CHAPTER III.

John Haddam was a stricken man. After forty years, being looked upon as Daltonby's leading citizen; twenty years as representative of the people he had looked down upon, rather than at, in the daily walk; he had been generous in providing work for the many, but he had exacted much; he had ground down the poor.

And McTaggart a new comer, "a whip-snapper" as Granny Tucker indignantly observed, having heard with appalled ears that "ol' man Haddam" had lost the Daltonby seat, and McTaggart was going to represent the old Riding. Granny Tucker was attending a case at Barwell's and Barwell after his day in the mill, over a bowl of soup was giving fragments of McTaggart's speech. "Ay," he knows us he do! It's bone and siney is workin' into sawdust he say's. Fourteen hours a day, say's he, Haddam gin's ye, say's he, cheatin' ye out o' two hours the A'mity gin' ye, say's he! The Lord A'mity' say's he, "gi's twel' hours o' wark an' twel' a' repose, say's he, but *Haddam takes two more on 'em* say's he—*steals 'em!* say's he——" "Aye" interrupts Granny, flirting a flannel gown of minute dimensions from a line conveniently above her head. "Them as don't hire allus pay big wage, belike it's the same A'mity as said t' McTiggert an' his sort: "Take the moths out o' yer own eye afore ye' sees the beans in ithers eye!"

This effectually closed Barwell's argument, and the newest arrival at Barwell's taking the dame's attention in the administration of catnip, Jem, shaking his head gravely, breathed rather than spoke the prediction that, "As sure as eggs is eggs ol' man's day in Daltonby's done!"

To his wife—once fair Cicely Bloomsbury — John Haddam had been a splendid investment. She drove her carriage and commanded her servants and had her children educated as befitted their station in life, but aside from a splendid investment she had nothing. Husband and wife grew apart. The son took after his mother, warm of heart, light, genial in nature, but the Daltonby world shook its head and said: "He'll spend what his father made." In his growing days Townley might have been saved from drifting into shoals of dissipation, by his mother's guiding

love and watchful tenderness, but John Haddam hated a "molly-coddled boy," and the sympathetic chord between the mother and son was allowed to grow lax.

Barbara had her father's cold unresponsive nature, she was of that type which does not lean, and does not offer support; she was proud, proud of her name, of her home, of her individuality; and when the blow fell that wrecked John Haddam's ambitions, it wrecked his daughter's pride. Between John Haddam and his wife no word had been spoken relative to any change in the business, he had said to her in his cold grave manner: "Some changes are imminent; please give the servants notice that they will not be required after the close of the year," adding "I think we shall be leaving Cozydean—I hope it won't inconvenience you my dear?" This term containing as much warmth as a January thaw.

"Not all John—anything you wish" was the answer, but much puzzled in mind as to the impending changes, she went to Townley who was making a late toilet after having made 'a night of it,' as alas! he often did now. From her son she learned—in the half serio, half comic way he treated any subject that touched him deeply—that "the hoodoo had struck the old man! "Mill's gone up, bank's gone down, creditors dancing a hornpipe on the lumber piles, and" (this with a reckless laugh) "Denovy's spook's among the saws!"

Townley was ill at ease when he took this vein—for some time he had seemed unlike himself—Mrs. Haddam looked at her son as he flung brushes and collars about with agitated haste; his hands trembled, his eyes—once beautiful eyes—were inflamed and bloodshot, he seemed ill at ease under his mother's eye, and called to her as she turned away: "Don't expect me back to dinner Mam," adding in an undertone while his lips were drawn and white, "*and perhaps never!*" Then with a reckless plunge down the stairway Townley passed out of Cozydean, whistling. His mother looking after him, sighed, and her eyes filled with a mist that shut not his swinging figure, then leaning her arms upon the window-ledge she moaned: "Oh, my boy, my boy! you are growing away from me too!"

That night Barbara Haddam was wakeful and her mind was divided between two harassing doubts. What was before her? A struggling existence as the wife of Tom Windsor—Tom the dreamer—or——? And she had loved Tom; loved him in the hard cold way that was part

of her nature ; she had hoped for his success ; she might wear her life out in hoping—everything seemed to fail her. Was it yesterday or a hundred years ago her dreams began to fade away ? A month ago her life was full of promise, and now some foreboding filled her mind. Her hands were cold and her head was burning, she pressed the chill fingers to her temples. Tom had failed too. He had not succeeded, and was not that failure ? Disaster had come to them, she knew that vaguely, and then came the thought, Townley would save them. Townley would make——

What sound was that ? A footstep, stealthily slow and cautious ; it was her brother stealing into the home. Would he fail them too ? A door opened, closed quietly, then a step uncertain yet heavy, passed along the hall, then a murmur of voices, and the deep silence that followed seemed to crack into pieces in one long agonized cry :—

“ O, God ! O, God ! ! ”

Barbara knew it was her mother's voice uttered that wail, and she did not shrink from meeting the danger. Her father was at Cañbelford ; she must meet the danger. As the thought of peril arose, fear fled, she swiftly passed down the stairway and burst into her mother's room. Standing over his wife's bowed form was John Haddam, even as Barbara looked at her father for explanation, she saw some awful change pass over his face, he made a movement of the lips as if to say something, put out a hand as if for help, then fell heavily. Her mother's eyes were turned mutely towards that fallen form, and as Barbara bent over, thinking some sudden faintness caused this terrible prostration, she noticed swift convulsive twitches of the muscles ; by quick degrees the features were warped-out of all semblance to the man, and with a wild cry for help she turned away.

It seemed long hours before Doctor Dinnie came, but he brought with him an influence of power that lifted some of the awful woe that weighed the troubled minds of the two helpless women hovering about the bed whereon the stricken man lay.

“ Must have had some sudden shock,” the old doctor said in an interrogative way, looking at Barbara. “ This political business, I suppose ; We must get Townley here at once, I will step down to see whether he's with Toft and the fellows—he should be here now—this is bad, bad.” While the word was on the doctor's tongue Townley himself, wild-eyed, trembling and agitated, stood there.

Mrs. Haddam tottered across the room to her son, calling on him to say it was not true ! Claspng him to her bosom and bewildering both Barbara and the doctor by this new and uncontrollable grief.

"O, what have I done?" was Townley's cry as he threw himself beside the bed, and then the full tide of that grief of griefs rushed on—manhood's tears—Barbara tried to stay that flood which she only understood to mean sorrow for this sudden illness, by whispering that 'father was very ill' not to 'distress him by tears,' but poor Townley turning to that shelter where he had ever found tender sympathy and patient affection sobbed :—

"I have done this ! I have dishonored my father's name, become a wanderer and a fugitive. Mother ! I am going away forever—I leave in your care *Grace Haddam, my wife !*

He was gone. Suddenly the daylight had crept in. In garish day the two womens' faces were ghastly, the lamp light made a dull glare, and the three people standing there looked at each other dumbly. And John Haddam, stricken and lying there, in a benumbed sort of way comprehended that his strength, his support was required, and he was helpless to give it.

The troubled eye of Doctor Dinnie was on the face of the sick man ; Barbara, pallid and stunned was looking at the door whence her brother had come as a phantom and gone as a deranged dream. John Haddam, his eyes fixed on his wife, appeared to try to articulate something, and unable to do so, some depth of added woe flitted across the face. Cicily Haddam understood, and in that moment of desolation she smiled while bending over, and with matchless mother love she said :—

"He has gone, John—gone, but I have faith in our boy's honor."

Barbara left the room at a motion from the doctor ; and in the hallway he stopped to whisper—*paralysis*—the maid was bustling about with a cheery contented face that struck Barbara with contrasting pang.

"I suppose that young scamp has been getting himself into some scrape, what was that he said about Gracie?" Doctor Dinnie blinked wickedly, gathering his brows in a heavy frown. "God bless me !" he ejaculated in answer to Barbara's almost soundless words, "God bless me ! Gracie *his wife* ! What will Bloomsbury say?"

What Bloomsbury would say was of little consequence just then but what Mrs. Bloomsbury did say, there was no mistake. Her shadow

plump and portly filled the door; bristling and fierce she entered, breaking into a torrent of words in which 'Grace,' 'disgrace,' 'thieves,' 'Townley,' 'deceit,' came in conglomerate and tumultuous discharge. There was no stopping the angry lady, her broken sentences were lashed on in infuriate wrath.

Doctor Dinnie, gathering the full import of her words, succeeded by adroit manoeuvring, in getting her out of the hall and into the dining room, where, in the pauses of an excited march up and down she explained between tearful gasps how she had been 'tricked,' 'blinded,' until Barbara faintly asked, with folded hands imploringly raised? "Aunt Bloomsbury, what is wrong?"

Aunt Bloomsbury repeated the words in savage fury: "*What's wrong?*" Do you ask *me* what's wrong? Then I'll tell you what's wrong: It was scarcely dawn when that scoundrel Townley, burst in at Hazlecopse, calling for my Gracie! And when I got down—gracious heaven!" gurgled Mrs. Bloomsbury, throwing herself upon a seat and shutting both eyes tight, as if to shut out the remembrance, "there was Grace Bloomsbury bellowing in his arms," squeaked the agitated lady, immediately adding in a hollow tone, "and then it came out that they were already—married!"

At this the lady fell a-weeping, and Barbara shook her head sadly; Doctor Dinnie, his hands crossed under his coat tails, his feet very wide apart, his lips tightly closed, uttered a sound that might mean a dozen different sentiments, but Mrs. Bloomsbury had recovered herself and was saying: "They were married last summer; you remember Barbara, the time we went up to that Indian mission—at St. Anne's—Oh!" she sobbed, "Perritt *must* go up and see that horrid little French priest, and see whether it can't be all undone—I dare say," she gurgled, "it was done in Latin or some way that the law can set aside—I've sent for Tom Windsor. If Tom Windsor would only attend to his profession and let his scribbling at silly novels alone—I'm sure he could find some way of undoing it all; oh, dear! oh, dear! to think of *my* Gracie being the wife of a—a common thief!"

"Aunt," said Barbara, sternly, "if Grace is Townley's wife, say no more. My brother may have been wild, he may have been weak, but he is no thief."

"That's right! quite right, my dear," chirped in Doctor Dinnie,

"even if he—~~er~~—has been—foolish, I like your pluck; (drat the young rascal! a wife, eh? My! my! what will Bloomsbury—say?)"

Then Mrs. Bloomsbury, having emptied her guns, now opened her trenches, and amid copious tears mingled with sobs, which came like dull thrusts and harmless, as from retreating forces, capitulated altogether; falling on Barbara's neck, and, as Doctor Dinnie afterwards said, "took conniptions," which may be a new disorder, and not yet classified in medical works.

Townley had gone. Of course, suspicion, that had been suspended, now pointed clearly that he had stolen the money package. His convivial habits had led to dissipation; dissipation had brought with it doubtful companions; doubtful company enticed him to the gaming table—and then the heaven had done its work. Gracie, with the full strength of her love, had tried to save him from such ways. He said if she were always by to save him, he would never be led (for Townley never imagined there was volition on his part) into such dangers. So, it happened one gala day, when at St. Anne's, where the simple folk, in great pomp and splendour, celebrated their saints' feast—the whole service being to those, not of the faith, a spectacular drama—Townley, with his cousin, having tired of wandering among the moss-grown tombstones with their quaint ornamentations, went into the quiet church for a talk. There they were met by a young ecclesiastic, who led them into the vestry. While the clergyman donned surplice and vestments Townley, who saw there was a mistake, whispered a few hurried words in Gracie's ear, who, until that moment, thought they were merely being shown through the church. With a fluttering heart it was that Gracie went forward, and in a few words, thoughtlessly, but for all time and eternity, they stepped into that new life. They received Father Damien's blessing upon their knees, like good children of the Church, just as arrived the real couple, with their friends, whom the little Father was expecting. This was a terrible mistake. The little priest became frantic with terror. What had he done? The good Bishop would be angry. Dieu? it was terrible!

Townley assured the good father that it was all right, but greatly distressed, Father Damien wrung his hands, examined the register again, and, finding the couple impatient in the church outside, asking forgiveness from above, and with much awe thinking what Monseigneur would say, he bade the young couple begone, and begged them ever to remember his sin was not of the heart.

And this was the end of all that happy dream? A little wife deserted, and the future unfathomably long, before her. But she stood up bravely for her banished scamp husband. A battle royal between herself and her mother ended in a draw, it might be said, and though the little heart sank so low sometimes, until it seemed to leave her altogether, still she defended his good name, and bore his silence and absence, like the little heroine she was.

The Honorable Dilraven Toft was the only one who had spoken to Townley before his flight. He refused to disclose that which was discussed. He admitted having given him the means to leave Daltonby, admitted it with reluctance, and, in a genuine burst of goodness (that carried with it much admiration for his sterling qualities as a friend) declared the boy had not deliberately stolen the money. To the hints of the card table, and that being the probable cause of the disappearance of the money, Mr. Toft only shook his head, saying:—"I asked Windsor to speak to Townley, but he wouldn't." And Barbara felt a new feeling rise up against Tom, and she thought how much she owed this good friend of her reckless brother.

CHAPTER IV.

The Haddams has come down in the world ! To one mind in Daltonby came the soothing thought—the Haddams had come down in the world !

Tom Windsor is seated at an office desk, and he has before him many pages of close-written paper. Tom is wandering in cloudland, indeed he is at this moment enveloped in a haze-blown atmosphere, and while he wanders in pythagorean lanes and dreams, suddenly with a contemptuous exclamation he rises, and we become aware, with a shock that the opalescent air is caused by an ordinary clay pipe, which he now takes from his lips and throws it with a sort of angry force within the open grate near by. Tom seats himself, after taking a turn across the office floor, and shutting his eyes, he leans very far back, but his thoughts are not pleasant. He is thinking with some bitterness, of the time John Haddam, in the arrogance of his successes forbade him to speak on a subject dear to Tom's heart. He would not give his daughter to a beggar ! Yes, that was what he called him—a beggar ! Tom was a beggar—that was quite true, his was a beggarly profession out of which little came. Marriage and home and children were out of the question for him—nothing but work, work, work. And for what ?

What might not be *now*, but for that scoundrel, the high-born reprobate with his insolent swagger ; the silkiness of his soft speech ; the feline face. Tom shook with the wave of disordered thought that surged and seemed to beat out in audible heart throbs that filled the small room ; then he took the pen up again and without ceasing wrote madly. The night passed in this way. The pen goes on swiftly. It is whispering hope now. A double thought seemed to be borne along in Tom's mind. The Haddams had come down in the world. Yesterday hopelessness for Tom—to-day all is altered—the glow of this renewed hope is chilled by the door opening suddenly and the wind comes careering in with a swirl, catching up the loose pages upon the desk and scattering them a confused heap upon the bare floor, and Tom looks up to see standing

there in the grey dawn the man he hates. The intruder stands watching the bits of paper frolicking about, then bursts into a laugh and says :—

"Hullo, Windsor, been burning the midnight, eh? Have I interrupted the banns of the Lady Edora and the adorable Sir Pooh, or have I come in at the death—which or how many of these things have I done—and how shall I undo them?"

"Ah, Toft! I am working a little later than usual—all nonsense I suppose, but when the ink-fever is on me perhaps it is as well to bleed the brain with the pen—aren't you a trifle early yourself though?" asks Tom rising to gather up the stray fallen leaves.

"Dashed if I knew what the late—or early light meant," said Mr. Toft seating himself comfortably. "I've just come from Inch-Arran; I've played pretty deep to-night—I mean last night—and by the way Windsor, that young friend of yours—well, he's going a pace too fast for his—years I think. I left him sleeping it off in my rooms—don't you think you ought to—interfere?"

Tom's brows folded darkly, "Yea," he said, "I fear Townley is doing rather badly—lately; but a man hesitates about giving advice, now you might —"

"ME?" Mr. Toft leaned back luxuriously; he laughed a low gurgling laugh that was most unpleasant, and turned an amused eye on Tom.

"Fancy ME advising anybody! Wouldn't it seem like a converted Hottentot saying to a respectable missionary: pray, sir, you are a little too cooked—too tender?" No, no," laughs Mr. Toft, "You're the one to do the missionary business—you, the highly moral young man—and an author." He laughed again, and in the same unpleasant way—looking at Tom through slits of eyelids, and something Machivalian in that look.

Tom had turned towards the open grate, and laid upon the coals some of the loose pages; a small curl of flame crept over them and it brightened into a blaze showing his face, white, drawn, troubled.

"I say now," exclaimed the visitor rising and approaching Tom, "you are a regular Inquisitor—dare say, you've burnt up no end of good living people—Sir Pooh, and—no, you'd never be so ungallant as to sacrifice the Lady Edora"—

"No," said Tom, "I've only burnt up the bad dreams of—yesterday;" Then watching the flame lingering devouringly about the bits of paper and holding his hands out, the white palms extended, he said: "Have you seen Haddam lately?"

"Y—ah," drawled his companion blinking into the fire, "dined there last evening—awfully sober dinner—deuced handsome girl that—I say Windsor, what a stunning wife she'd make for a"—

Mr. Toft stopped suddenly. He saw—pitilessly saw the despairing face before him. He knew how Tom Windsor had laboured for success—the success that might some day come to him that he might—"terrible blow to Haddam," coos Mr. Toft eyeing Tom sideways; "Bloomsbury didn't like to do the hard thing, you know—rather lose double the money he says—though, by gad—if it happened my old gov'nor—he'd let me do time for it—Haddam's made an assignment, I believe—sort of priestly honor I think—restitution, all that sort of thing."

"I don't believe Townley—knows anything of the money," said Tom looking straight at Mr. Toft.

"You don't—really? Well, I suppose he *was* a little—muddled—still that doesn't—Have you been down, Windsor?" broke off Mr. Toft suddenly.

"No," says Tom without looking up, "I hate to go there and see another man's misery—and I've been working rather—close."

"Now, Windsor," begins Toft, with an argumentative turn of the head, "don't you think you're rather foolish wasting your life—I mean, of course, on this sort of thing?" Mr. Toft swept an arm towards the pages upon the table, and Tom, seeing the motion, made a nervous reach of shielding hands above the littered leaves, whereon rested his hopes; and in his eyes a new fear awakened—would he too, rob him of this?

"It means life or—death to me," breathed Tom.

"Well, well," repeats Mr. Toft leaning back and forming a comfortable pillow of upraised arms: "I'd rather be on the "round-up" myself in a prairie blizzard, and hope to come out alive, than expect to gain a woman by writing—books! Why, man!" he said in a burst of disdainful sympathy, "they aren't worth it!"

Tom sighed, drawing the papers towards him, while his head drooped in a hopeless way.

"Chuck it all in there," says Mr. Toft with a movement of the well-fitting boot towards the fire, "come out West with me—cut the whole business—the Nor'West is the place for a fellow with brains—cut the whole business—I give you my word, Windsor, since I went out there I feel like a new man—there's something in the atmosphere that gives you new blood, new hope, new life, or," he laughed, "clarifies the old! Why, Windsor, in ranche life out West there's health, hope and happiness; it grows with the grass; you fairly swallow it!" says the enthusiastic gentleman.

Tom looked up, but the temporary sentiment was gone, Mr. Toft was practical now, "Let everything go to the deuce," he added persuasively, rolling a cigarette, "they tell me she's kept you dangling for—years?" Mr. Toft's eyes were on Tom now, rat-like but cautious, he actually as if by force of his will-thought, dragged from Tom the answer:

"Seven—years."

"Gad!" he exclaimed, stooping to put the tip of his cigarette against a red coal, "think of waiting seven years for one woman, and the world full—running over with 'em!"

The gentleman stretched his legs out comfortably, contemplating his highly polished shoes, and laughed silently—amusedly, unctiously.

"You see it was this way," said Tom apologetically, and heart-weary for sympathy, "I always loved her—always—but when father died"——

"Member," interjected his companion nodding, "Sometimes I wish I'd gone down that time myself! Saw your old man when they got out the last boat—awful—awful!" Mr. Toft relapsed into silence, some inner thought rose in his mind, he paled a little, shook his head once or twice, and then with sudden interest appeared to catch what Tom was saying: "Had mother to look after—then it was all up-hill work—the profession is slow—so slow; I suppose I ought to have given up"—— Tom stopped. He would not name her to this man, who, while he repelled, somehow bewitched him into giving his confidence. Mr. Toft nodded as by way of filling the gap, and Tom went on: "She was willing to wait—her father wouldn't allow of any engagement; he told me to place myself in a position to keep his daughter, and then"——

There was something devilish in the laugh that broke in on Tom's words:—"Gad! and now he's down himself!" chuckled Toft, luxuri-

ously. "You've got your revenge, Windsor!" The laugh was genuinely, irresistably overwhelming; its echoes filled the room as if other voices took up the sound, and his face took on a new cunning, as he bent over to say:—

"Put it in your book—put it in your book, Windsor! Immense idea! Old duffer very rich—glorious daughter—goody, goody young man—poor but honest—fol-de-rol love affair—young man waits—young lady weeps—old gent loses money—goes to jail—goody, goody young man goes to rescue—no, he DOESN'T—I'm damned if he does! Says:—Hullo, old Money-bags! You're down—I'm up—when *you're* in a position, *come to me*, and, perhaps, I'll take your dazzling daughter!" Mr. Toft is so overcome with the humor of the thought, he sways backward and forward, and while he roars with the mirth he feels, he regards Tom with amazement, for Tom does not laugh.

"You don't understand me," says Tom, slowly. Then, turning suddenly—

"Why should you be interested in me—in my failure or success?"

"Because, Windsor," said Mr. Toft, still smiling a superior sort of smile, and placing a heavy hand upon the shoulder of Tom sitting there, "I will marry Barbara Haddam inside of ten days—unless you do."

Tom looked in the eyes of the man standing before him, looked dumbly despairingly.

"Gad!" thought the owner of the eyes now mercilessly fixed on the white face before him, mute agony in every line. "It is exactly like the eye of a steer when the axe is raised to beef him!"

"Come!" he said, aloud, "all's fair in love and war. I give you first chance. Egad, I'm willing to handicap myself, you see. Let's try it together. I give you a day's start, and the best horse wins."

The speaker stepped back a little, buttoned his coat comfortably, threw back his shoulders, set his silk hat jauntily above his black hair, "Come" he said, "it's positively broad day—early bird you know—lets' go and breakfast together; eh?"

Tom only shook his head, but there was that in his eye that touched the untouchable heart of Dilraven Toft—was that look fear, or was it hate? The door closed after Mr. Toft's retreating form, his footsteps became fainter, other sounds grew on Tom's hearing. The sleepy eye of the little town opened, the pulse of day began to beat, but standing there

motionless, that same look upon his face, his eyes staring into vacancy, Tom moved not.

* * * * *

Looking in each others' eyes they stood in the wavering light of waning day. The man's face full of a new decision over which some inner emotion played, as the thought rose or fell. The woman was less conscious in look. There was subdued haughtiness, if not resignation in the bearing. Humbled to the heart's core she might be but to show it? Never!

I don't think she saw Tom even while her look was directed to him; she saw beyond — she looked back — back over the years when in that same room, Tom, full of youth and hope told her the same same story. Then she thought this same word the stepping stone to her ambitious dreams. He would be a great writer; she loved him, oh, she loved him, loved the power of him, the hope of him, and — ah! that was seven years ago — and now, seven years after, he was telling her the same sweet words. She shivered as she remembered, and with a sudden shock came the question to her mind: — "Where was the success? Where the bounding confidence of youth, the determination; *the lost years*; where was the success? He had failed — utterly failed and she — ? Something like anger rose in her mind, and she could not repress the shudder she gave when a strong hand took her's up gently.

"Are you cold Barbara — darling?"

"Yes" she answered, drawing back and putting her hands over her heart and looking up with a hard light in that glance, "I am cold — here."

"And you will come now Barbara — come to us. Mother is so glad in the thought — it will give me new courage, and dearest, with you nearer and dearer," Tom's voice was very low and soft now, "I will surely succeed."

"Madness! rank madness!" she said giving an impatient movement of the shoulders. Pride in a baffled hot tide surged within; and her impatient imperious spirit broke out into words: "We are paupers — paupers! Everything has failed us! To join flying forces means double defeat — double disaster. I can't — I can't stand — poverty!" and her arms went upwards, a passionate gesture half defiance, half despair, and

she repeated "I can't meet poverty—like you." "It seems so dreadful" she began again fiercely, a tremor of tears in the voice, "so dreadful to be hemmed in, in this way." The vehemence of her words filled Tom with almost fear of her. "Papa's death, Townley's disgrace, and now *you* come with your—you—your"—she stopped; Tom leaned towards her, his sight fascinated by the blast of her passion, "*importunities!*" The cruel word hurled at him had an effect. "Ah!" that was all he said, but he looked at her silently, tenderly; then said in a dry harsh voice: "Good-bye Barbara, good-bye."

It was with an uneven step he left the room. Half blinded by the shock at seeing this new, and to him, terrible phase of her character, he walked on towards the roadway. The sailors on the man o' war were singing, and over the Shallows came the gay refrain; the whole air seemed to tingle with life and happiness. A footstep coming towards him roused his attention. A swaggering form approaching paused, and called out:—

"Hullo Windsor! You've taken a dose of *la médecine expectante* I see! Well, I gave you a fair start anyway, you'll admit that, won't you? *And the best horse wins!*" Mr. Toft's mocking laugh mingled with the song from the ship beyond, making discord in the dissonance of one sore heart. Yes, the best horse must always win.

CHAPTER V.

When next we see Grace Haddam she is bereft of that happy smile. There is a new light in her blue eyes—sadness tinged with fear. She moves with a forlorn crouching step and the small well-shaped mouth wears a droop now. Her vivacious manner is subdued, "mokey," as Carrie and Elegantia say, in confidential growls. But Carrie and Elegantia have much happiness in their own souls; for out there upon the Shallows lie two men o' war, captained by the gallant de Hebert and the brave Von Krissman, and soon there will be a double wedding. Quite true, Von Krissman might appropriately paraphrase the rubric formula into "With all my worldly debts I thee endow," but Von Krissman made the method of living on his debts an art, and there a special mental ability required for this we admit.

Captain de Hebert had, with generous confidence, assured his Elegantia that he really had no present means to marry on, but Mrs. Bloomsbury was fully alive to the advantages of an alliance with a family of the *noblesse*, and she moreover knew that "a bird in the hand" is worth several hundred "in the bush," so she held a confidential chat with the gay captain in which she intimated, with delicate tact that "Pa would manage the financial part," in short, act as a sort of favoured chancellor of the family exchequer."

"Mon Dieu! vat a généralé dat womans would make! Bien, she vill tur-r-n de capsizé of one gunboat," and the gallant captain laughed a chuckling low laugh as he paced the quarter deck, and watched the lights twinkling at Hazle Copee.

"What will Gracie wear, mamma?" Elegantia is saying as she surveys her lithe form in a mauve creation just arrived from New York.

"I hardly know," hesitates mamma, lifting her eyes from an embroidered mystery, and tilting her head to one side in order to get a better view, "really your pa cannot afford another penny of outlay. We figured it all out last night, and, my dear, it is almost alarming! Your pa says the—the cost is *much* more than he anticipated!"

"There's my cream India-muslin," chimes in Carrie, from a low seat, where, smothered in billows of tulle she appeared a lone mermaid afloat in foam, "she may have my lace bounce, I shan't want it, because, you know, mamma, there are two big holes in it now."

"Nobody will notice what she has on anyway," added Elegantia. "She is getting so mokey, always crowding herself in a corner. I don't suppose she would want to go up to the very front," casting a pleased glance over a puffed shoulder, "it would only remind her of her own miserable marriage—little fool!"

Mrs. Bloomsbury sighed; a cloud settled upon her face and she said somewhat sadly:—

"She told pa she would prefer not being present at all, which, indeed would be the very best arrangement, but then," snipping a thread savagely, "people would talk I dare say;" immediately altering her tone to a reflective key, "the muslin touched up a bit will do very well."

"Did you know that Uncle Roger is coming to be in time for the marriage?" asked Carrie.

"Good gracious! Roger Haddam coming in time for the marriage? I hope your pa"—

"She means Barbara's marriage of course, mamma," explained Elegantia. "He is very rich, you know, but no doubt quite wild."

"What a blessing it is," remarked the elder lady blandly, "that Cicily will be gone before our affair! You see their being here, would quite put the possibility of *an affair* out of the question; but if they are gone, three months' mourning will do; three months is a quite decent gap."

"I feel *positive*," said Elegantia, emerging from the mauve creation, by degrees; "she is hurrying away just to avoid seeing us; she is so spiteful! Do you think, mamma, this *jabor* is skimpy, and has Mr. Toft really any claim to a title?"

"Yes, my dear, quite, I believe so," answered mamma, vaguely combining the two questions; "that is if his father dies—I don't care for too much fulness when the lace is good—but you know they say the old gentleman is quite healthy—it shows the pattern so much better."

"I can't understand Barbara marrying anyone but Tom," said Carrie thoughtfully; "just think, after all the years and years he waited! It must be an awful blow to him."

"Tut, tut," said Mrs. Bloomsbury reproachfully, looking up and

frowning, "Mrs. Bumbleton was telling me his grent book came back again; Barbara is a sensible girl to do the best she can for herself."

"But it's an awful jump from a poet to a rancher, isn't it?" And dropping her needle Carrie rested a dimpled chin in two doubled fists and looked into space as if expecting no answer.

"Well," said her mamma wisely, nodding, "there may be more profit in pigs than poetry, and sonnets won't sell like cheese!"

"O Mamma!" gasped Elegantia, "I *do* hope Mauleverer won't hear anything about *cheese*! Do you know he thought at one time of going out there to the prairies for our honeymoon, wouldn't it be *awful* if he did decide to go after all?"

"Mauleverer will go wherever your pa and I decide he should," said Mrs. Bloomsbury tartly, and Elegantia blushed, remembering that indeed papa might cause untold disasters, so she branched off saying:—"Well, if Mr. Toft is heir to an earldom he can afford to be eccentric."

"It must be a wonderful country out there," said Carrie with a far-away look; there are hundreds of miles of level plain without a tree at all, and Aunt Cissy says that Townley is on"—There was a sudden stop; at the silence both ladies looked up, to see standing in the doorway, Gracie, her usually wan face lit up with some tinge of color, and an open letter in her hand. She smiled a sad little smile that was like the ghost of a laugh that had wandered and wandered and spent itself out, dying for lack of nourishment.

"Oh!" chirps Carrie, in a cheerful way, "Here's Gracie now; we've just been planning something for you to wear. The dad's dead broke, and everything else stingy and dreadful. Let us hear your choice, girlie—say crimson. It would brighten up that solemn, round face of yours, and—we'll be in white, you know—so you must be a foil."

Elegantia gave a warning glance in the direction of the speaker, then passed it on to the elder lady, who was making mental calculations upon the embroidered work in her hands. Gracie sat down close to the foam of tulle, where she looked like a bit of dulce floating seaward, and threading her small fingers nervously, she began, with a sort of gasp.—

"I—shan't be here—to—to wear—anything, dear," lowering the golden head until the yellow strands looked like truant sunbeams straying, "I'm going to my——husband!"

"What——t?" This a concerted shriek from the three ladies.

"I'm going out to Townley—out West, with Ma Haddam."

Out of Carrie's wail, as she cast herself into Gracie's arms across the tulle ocean, regardless of its perishable nature, came Mrs. Bloomsbury's howl of dismay, for there is no other word that could express the sound to which that dismayed lady gave utterance.

"I'm going—going to—Townley!" sobbed Gracie, now a very limp little body, breaking down a wreck in words, but becoming a marvel of strength in purpose. "I'm going with Ma Haddam," she sobbed from Carrie's supporting arms, who cried in sympathy—a tutelary goddess of the tulle waves.

"Do go, Gracie, *do go!* Mamma, don't you see she is fading away, dying?" Here the goddess suddenly became aware of the antagonism existing betwixt tulle and tears, and in the important task of rescuing her damaged finery, she forgot to complete her sentence, but Elegancia was already saying:—

"Let her go, mamma! It would be better for her to go. She gives me the dismal, always crying."

But Mrs. Bloomsbury was storming valiantly, and harkening to no one. "The very idea! Such madness! Going out to that dreadful place, where there are no people but savages! *Wild savages and Tommy-Hawks!*" (I think Mrs. Bloomsbury imagined the latter a species of Indian chief). "This was Cicily's work; no doubt she advised this rash move, *no doubt!* Going out West to a—a *common* policeman—not even a soldier; a policemen, living on fifty cents a day; going out there to be scalped! To be trampled down by buffaloes; to be burnt up by prairie fires; *miles and miles of prairie fires!* To be devoured by *wolves*—was it wolves or mosquitoes? Anyway, by *dreadful* creatures that roamed about and *compelled* travellers to build fires to keep them off at night, or did they shoot them? She forgot, but she *believed* they shot them! There was a man went out there once—was his name Anticknap or Dobbs? She was sure it wasn't Dobbs, but he went out there and *he died!*" The lady's breath, if not vocabulary, being exhausted, she recuperated her strength by a comfortable cry, declaring, in plaintive gurgles, that her "children were all leaving her," and she was only a "lonely old woman, anyhow," becoming rational when the thought occurred to her that Von Krissman, with two brother officers, were coming to dine that day, so, under cover of excessive grief, she disappeared,

forgetting the matter altogether in the nice preparation of an orange jelly for Von Krissman's palate.

Elegantia began to fear that Gracie's trip might mean some reduction in her allowance, and she followed her mamma in much anxiety to discuss the probable chances, and if necessary defend her rights. Carrie and Gracie being left alone there followed a long and tearful confab, in which confidential whisperings there was much kissing and many "oh's," a sworn promise on Carrie's part "*never, never* to tell," and amid renewed embraces, surreptitious clippings of embroidery lengths, looting among laces (this spoilation being conducted by Carrie alone), and a chunk off the (damaged) tulle; for Carrie was practical as well as good hearted, Gracie was coaxed into smiles.

It became apparent to Mrs. Bloomsbury that Grace Bloomsbury and Grace Haddam were two entirely different persons. She had to accustom her mind to the fact that Grace was a child to be bidden no longer, and she sobbed this to sympathising friends who were much shocked to learn "the child was set on going to a mere mounted policeman whose pay was but fifty cents a day, whose occupation was killing Indians by government contract, that, and being on guard *all night long*—which meant he was obliged to keep walking up and down with a *loaded* gun all ready to fire off at anybody who ventured *near the place*; walking there all night long without *a wink of sleep* for hours and hours and hours! Wasn't it awful?" At the same time Mr. Townley, in a smart suit of regimentals, his spurs clanking (he had already accomplished the feat of walking without tripping himself up disastrously), stripes on his arm, for indeed Townley had been that very very day made a corporal, and under a cap—the exact dimensions of a silver dollar which perched miraculously—was his giddy head.

Uncle Roger had come. Big of build, ruddy of beard, brown of face; his voice a tremendous bellow, his laugh the heartiest and honestest ever heard. He kissed both Carrie and Elegantia in the very faces of the noble officers, who only overlooked this familiarity upon viewing the size and weight of a watch-chain "*made*"—he informed them in a voice capable of accommodating a hall suited to ten thousand people—"of Saskatchewan gold and taken from a bend in that river, running through his own ranching grounds."

There was something of power about Uncle Roger; he spoke of his nineteen-hundred acres of land with less extravagance or braggadocio

than de Hebert did of the poop of his ship, which he trod upon by leave only. He referred, with no pomp whatever, to his twenty-hundred head of stock, and to the exceeding great relief of Mrs. Bloomsbury never once mentioned cheese. Of the gay officers he expressed open contempt, designating de Hebert as "a gopher laying in his supply!" While his highest (expressed) opinion of Von Kriassman—notwithstanding the latter often referred to his father as "Count Yollop"—was "spavined, and" he added "wanted the hobbles put on," all of which was meant no doubt to be humorous, but it hurt the feelings of Mrs. Bloomsbury.

The day of parting came. Uncle Roger had wound up the business of his unfortunate brother, and no trace whatever of the missing money package was found. Mrs. Haddam gladly accepted the offer of Uncle Roger's home, and helpless and weeping, prepared for the journey with some kind of thankfulness in her heart, that though Townley had failed them all at the critical time, that she was not to be parted altogether from her children. So in the noon shadows cast by the tall trees around the Kirk, Roger Haddam gave Barbara over to the keeping of his friend the Honorable Dilraven Toft, with the consciousness that his niece was making a sensible and advantageous match.

There were few to witness the ceremony; Mrs. Bloomsbury was there in subdued splendour, feeling considerable disappointment in "such shabby proceedings." Mrs. Haddam weeping quietly behind a black-edged handkerchief, wondered whether she wished it was Tom Windsor standing there making responses, or ———. Barbara was the same grand cold creature who by no sign showed what she wished, or indeed whether she ever held any wishes whatever; she looked even disinterested.

At the doors of Cozydean Uncle Roger was in his own words, "rounding up" his folks. Hurried good-byes were said, hasty plans laid for half forgotten things; messages left for those who had not come to say good-bye; and it seemed forever and forever the dear Shallows were fading from sight. Gracie, the only perfectly happy one in that group at finding herself borne on, giving no thought to those left behind; her all was ahead. She was counting her valises and enumerating the dozens of things she had forgotten to put in them. There was Townley's violin, Townley's smoking cap, Townley's this and that, until it would seem that all the possessions she carried or forgot to carry, were for the comfort and amusement of one gentleman alone. Uncle Roger admired her

pluck in going out to the Lone Land to fight life's battle with her scamp-husband, but Gracie had confided to Uncle Roger her devout belief in Townley's innocence; and it was only because some one—he had not told her who—had hinted he was likely to be arrested for the theft of the money, not only being *advised*, by this friend, to leave Daltonby, but giving him means to go with; and indeed “Papa knew Uncle John never took it, and *who* would ever be so mean, so *bad* as to *say* Townley touched the horrid stuff? And it would all come out right yet—she was *sure* of it!” And Uncle Roger loved this little woman who, so stoutly, in the face of dark suspicions, upheld her husband's honor, and with a brave heart was going out to join him in his exiled home.

In those talks between Townley's wife and Uncle Roger, there sprung up a strong confidence and friendship. In this fragile small wife Uncle Roger saw the pluck and determination that is the seed of success. His opinion of his graceless nephew was leaning to doubtful, but with such a wife as this, Uncle Roger conceded there was much to hope for. Even Mr. Toft, who shook his head solemnly when Townley's name was mentioned, sometimes hinted his disbelief that he ‘took the money—intentionally.’

Barbara—now the honorable Mrs. Dilraven Toft—sat calm, majestic, impressionless. The Hon. himself seated opposite, feasted his eyes on her matchless beauty, admiring the dull splendour of her manner; a punctilious politeness masking his exultant mind, which Barbara accepted with a languid indifference exasperating to the honorable gentleman.

The train had left Winnipeg and was now on the fifth day's journey, and speeding over a level table land; the bush begins to grow sparse, and glimpses of real prairie now meet the eye. Great fields unfenced, wherein brown patches of ploughed ground lay; further on, snow-capped hedges of underbrush; here and there log shanties, and “towns” pretentious in name but evasive in population.

“I say,” said the honorable Mr. Toft rousing himself, as the train with much crunching of wheels and shrieking of whistles glided into a station where the houses—quite elaborate structures wearing dignified Queen Anne fronts—hung on a sloping hillside, the architectural view from the rear however being quite modest in comparison. “I say, let us get out here and stretch our legs; B r a n d o n!” repeated Mr. Toft peering through the window, I wonder if it was here “by the margin of

the woodland ' sweet Belle strayed ? " And he took up the old tune with an abstracted air, " Come," he said looking at his watch " I am told there is a delay here for some reason, and I am sick of this—coop." The word ' infernal ' was what the pause meant, but Mr. Toft was determined to act out his part during the honeymoon at least, and to act it out well,

Barbara had been so unresponsive during the last few days that she forced herself now to say " Thank you Dillraven, a breath of real air will be refreshing," and she followed her husband out into that invigorating, life-giving atmosphere which lends an excitation, and is found only in the Canadian North-West. They took a couple of brisk turns up and back upon the platform, whereon an eclectic crowd had congregated ; There was a clerical hat above a clerical face, solemnly looking out past the crowd, his severe black garments distinctly outlined against a red-blanketed native, stolidly eyeing the bustling people. There were red-jacketed youths with tiny cockle-sized caps jauntily set above one ear, and parading about with conscious admiration of themselves. Gracie was looking at one of those scarlet tunics and thinking that Townley must look like that, only much handsomer ; listening to the click of the spurs as the long boots made martial music upon the planks. Her face shone with joy. She was within sight of her new home ; within reach—almost within reach of her husband. A summer shower of tears fell and she wanted oh, so much ! to rush out and say to everybody that her love, her Townley too, was a soldier ! Ma Bloomsbury said he wasn't a soldier, but he was, he was, he was !

The honorable Mr. Toft was pacing up and down, spreading himself, and attracting a good deal of notice by reason of the magnificent woman whom he appeared to address so familiarly, and who occasionally and so coldly bent her head in reply to his ostentatious high-horse manner. He had secured a special edition of a newspaper and was frowning darkly, pooh-poohing at intervals and ejaculating explosive words with no apparent meaning. There was a sudden rush by an excited crowd from the station when a pudgy little blue-coated brass-buttoned man, bristling with official airs, in answer to a portly old gentleman's anxious enquiry, said :

" Yes, we wait here until the special passes."

Gracie, her ears alive to the smallest word spoken, became wildly curious when such words as " troops," " Indians," " fight," " police," were wafted about.

"By gad!" ejaculates the honorable Mr. Toft, pulling sulkily at his mustachios, "I expect I'll be called on myself, if this is allowed to go on!"

"If what goes on, Mr. Toft?" asked Gracie, eager-eyed. "What is it they are saying about troops?"

Before Mr. Toft could reply, a rakish young man, carrying a rakish gold-mounted whip and wearing a wide-rimmed felt-hat, his legs encased in leather leggings that reached the thighs, and were gaudily fringed from the hip to the knee, growing quite fierce about the lower extremities, where glittering spurs completed the air of brigandage, stepped up, and familiarly slapping Mr. Toft's back, a broad smile beaming upon his face, shouted:—"Hullo, Dilly! getting back? What d'ye think of the row? Serious, eh?"

The gentleman addressed seemed taken aback a moment; but he extended a hand, with great friendliness, saying:—"Why, Jerry! Where did you drop from?" adding, with a frown, "I feared this. I was in London when Olds wired me there was trouble; I hurried over, but—— ah, yes!" turning to his wife, "permit me, my dear, my friend and neighbor, Mr. Jerry Donovan, Jerry, Mrs. Toft."

This introduction came upon the person styled Jerry, like a shock. He wondered ever after whether he remained "staring like a blanked stuck pig," as he afterwards said, or roared right out at Mr. Toft "You lie!" The surprise upset Jerry so much he lost his reputation for politeness. He simply let his jaw drop and stared at the lady, who inclined her head slightly, and took no further notice of his presence, which, under all circumstances, was considered stunning. He drew Mr. Toft aside to ask, with a wink—"Is she the clear Macoy, Dilly, or——?"

"Its O. K. this time, Jerry—O. K.," responds Mr. Toft.

"What is it they are saying about troops, Barbara?" queries Gracie, in an anxious tone, Mr. Toft won't listen to me; I've asked him twice."

"Really, I do not know," answered Barbara. "Is it an uprising, Dilraven?"

"Ya—a," said Mr. Toft, blinking savagely, "it seems there's no end of a row—troops called out—Indians on the war-path, damn 'em!" And Gracie, with terrified eyes, turned to Uncle Roger, who was coming towards them, excited in manner, to ask, with beseeching arms upraised:—"Would the police be forced to fight? Would Townley have to go?"

A terrific shriek was hurled through the air, a rumbling that came sweeping and rolling on, and a line of red, like a wave of blood passed by with lightning speed. The eye caught the crimson blur which seemed to drip from each car window, and in its wild rush towards the West the rubescent tinge overflowed and seemed to pour itself upon the platform of each car. It was the first detachment of our brave Canadian boys who went to the front, and those looking on that day, knew that war with its insatiate thirst for blood was over this young land.

Faces became suddenly grave, eyes grew anxious, there were eager consultations and hurried groupings. Some speculators going through decided to go no further. There was a scramble for baggage checked through, a frenzied demand to gain speech with the conductor, who was locked in the small telegraph office, and gave heed to nothing but the sound of a small key under the touch of the operator. The Honorable Dilraven Toft was blustering about offering enormous sums of money for impossible things. "The express to wait here until the next special passed by?" The honorable gentleman was wild with agitation; He'd "wire the head office! Damn 'em somebody would smart for this! His property was at the mercy of the d--natives. His property would be looted! Could they furnish *him* with a special?— 'em he'd pay for it! The explosive little man was allowed to expend his feelings unnoticed. The C. P. Railway was engaged just then with the problem of forwarding troops to guard the lives of those, who at that same hour looked with blanched faces and despairing eyes for the brave lads who went, alas! many of them to prairie graves.

CHAPTER VI.

Above the snowy banks of the Saskatchewan a late March sun threatened to break up altogether the jagged blue mass of ice that spanned that river at Batoche. A slight-built, bronze-tanned youth stood above the snow-capped banks, sweeping the retreating line of prairie with a large field-glass. His keen eye rose over the wave-crested sweep of level land across whose breast bejeweled shrubs glistened with resplendent brightness, while a soft crooning wind, like a troubled sigh carried a message of grief along the rolling plain to those who waited and watched at home, while sons, husbands, fathers and brothers stood firm that day in God's fair sunshine, keeping one thought only in mind : loyalty to home.

The lad seemed to steady the glass at one point for a long time, so long that a small speck while he looked — seemed to grow into shape, then dropping the glass, with excited eyes he peered under the shade of a thin slender hand into the far distance.

"Any sign of the boys, Nance?" The lad started and seemed to tremble while a wave of red passed over the eager face.

"I saw something" he said, "but I—don't think—it was our boys—too far East for that."

"Lem'me see," said the newcomer taking the glass and levelling it, turning until the same speck the lad had so anxiously surveyed seemed to arrest his eye.

"Ah," he said fixing his gaze intently, "seems t' me as ef it be a—scout—'r —mebbe some settler a-comin' in—no 't'aint; aint goin' fast enough fer that—hullo! as I'm a livin' sinner—bet ye what ye like it's Toft!—Cap'tn hed a telegrast, an' I heer Porter a-tellin' he'd be in a-most enny time—he'll be a fetchin' acrost his title this time like enough—them there damn Engliahmen—an' the'r titles! Gim'me a man as has'nt got no mark on'y his cattle brand—that's the sort fer out West—eh Nance?" The boy was trembling as he reached his hands for the glass, the speaker stopped and after looking at him a moment said :

"See here, Nance, ye ain't strong enough for this sort of thing, you oughter a-gone into shelter with the women folks—that there propity of Toft ain't no such valew as a man's mortal life—an him——; I kin tell ye boy, *he* ain't the one t' risk his heels fer no herd of cattle—you are a fool t' do it Nance—a FOOL."

Together they turned away, went down the slope, the boy silent and casting backward glances across the waste of snowy prairie with dulled eyes—silent—thoughtful—his mind far away, as he moved mechanically on. He made no response to his companions discourse which was mainly a metaphysical memorandum of ideas expressive of the belief that "the Lord helps them as helps themselves." "Maybe it is word from Middleton?" broke in the lad on Millar's words.

"Mebbe," says Millar pausing at the gate leading to Shaganappy Ranche where his companion, without asking him to enter, now turned, carefully closing the gate between them. Millar went on, turning only once to hawl "I say Nance, ye better give what I was sayin' a thort; at Duck Lake they're lootin every damned shack, I'm told,—and ye ain't fit"—

The boy waved an arm to show that he had heard, and going in the broad door of a handsomely built house known as Shaganappy Ranche did a very peculiar thing. He sat down and began to cry—softly. As the tears flowed faster and faster and actual sobs shook the miserable frame, it was quite apparent he was a delicate creature and easy to understand the physical want of strength. No wonder they had nick-named him Nancy. It was Toft did that; Toft in his clever way saw through the effeminate nature of the ragged fellow the first day he struck Goshen where he fell ill of the Red River fever, and into the ways of Goshenites at the same time, taking up his abode in a shack long considered unfit for habitation. Someway he struggled through the long illness, coming out into the Goshen world so weak and wan that the boys "fell to," and with the characteristic big heart of "first settlers" set Sherald—for that was his name—up in regular batching fashion. His handy ways made him a valued factor in Lower Flat society. He had been "molly-coddled" the boys said, but they came to him with their ragged problems, and their darning deficiencies; his success with the needle being quite amazing to the boys, who winked at each other, averring in under tones "he's a hidin' fer some scrape—" and out of regard for his usefulness—made no vulgar inquiries as to whence came or whither he was going.

After a time it became apparent that he was'n't going anywhere—he had become a duly qualified citizen of Lower Flat; the mystery about him, if any really existed, died out when it was seen he did not shrink from meeting strangers, and spoke with a certain freedom of his life in the North. It was during the first days of his illness that the honorable Dilraven Toft discovered Sherald. The honorable Dilraven Toft was one of the biggest ranchers in the Territories, "Shaganappy Ranche" was known as far east as Toronto and as far north as Norway House and was the stopping place of every traveller of note passing that way; and it was owing to the facetiousness of "Dilly" Toft that Sherald was henceforth known as "Nancy."

The honorable Toft, who answered to the familiar name of "Dilly," was known to be the prospective heir to vast estates in England. There were hints of a title, too, that in time would come to the owner of Shaganappy Ranche. Annual trips to the Old Country always presaged a flow of funds—inexhaustible in source it would seem, for the honorable Toft drew copious cash draughts, making his home one of the most generously furnished spots west of Winnipeg. "Nancy" he took out of small hut, nursed back to strength, made him overseer on his place, and in time manager of the vast business.

It was on one of those annual trips to England that the rebellion, long seething, broke out. Captain Olds, an old friend, and now a neighbour, cabled Mr. Toft the news of the outbreak, and that gentleman was expected almost any day. His advent was looked forward to by a certain element of the Flat, who regarded the return of "Dilly" with as much anxiety as Middleton's movements, which meant life or death to those who, wide-eyed watched for help, the help they prayed might come. The honorable Toft carried a "permit," and a permit held a holy meaning in Goshen.

After Nancy sat some time buried in this grief, of which we have spoken, he rose with a heavy sigh, proceeded to an inner apartment where, with recovered cheerfulness he adjusted matters economic. He was whistling cheerily enough now as with wonderful deftness he set about making the bannocks for which he was far-famed already. During the progress of this toothsome luxury the sound of galloping hoofs was heard approaching, and in a short time a slight-built, wiry, white haired old gentleman—unmistakably a gentleman of the old school—entered, rubbing his hands and blinking flecks of frost from his eye-

lashes; he wore a pair of riding corduroys, high boots, and small silver spurs—which he never made a feint even, of using on Brandy-boy—and jauntily swung a small riding whip in his left hand.

"Hello, Cap!" was Nancy's greeting as he spun two round cakes into the large oven; "I thought it was Brandy-boy's heels I heard—you're just in time for supper—any news from Frog Lake?"

"I've news, Nance"—answered the old gentleman removing his handsomely beaded deer-skin coat, and looking at the lad in a puzzled way, "news—but not"—Captain Olds stopped. He began to walk about in a thoughtful jerky fashion, his brows gathered in a frowning way, while he lashed the floor absently with his whip.

"Nothing worse, I hope," said the lad, pausing before the old gentleman, his hands filled with plates, whereon saucers were piled and cups perilously hung, "than that Big Bear has been caught and—quartered."

"Toft's come," said the captain, shortly.

Nancy's hands trembled, and he hurriedly laid the dishes upon the table, his lips pressing hard together, but saying nothing for a little time. Then he said, slowly:—"He's—drunk, I suppose—and to-night there'll be"—

"He's married," blurted out the old gentleman in an explosive way; "brought his wife along, and when I"—. There was such a strange bewildered look on the face of the lad that Captain Olds stopped. "It must have been the dull evening light that played such a trick with Nancy's features," the old gentleman went on, watching the boy. "When I was coming up the big hill I met Porter; he had passed them at Cameron's; coming in—horses played out, he says—came sixty miles to-day, from Haddam's ranche—I rode on here to tell you—what the devil are you glaring at?"

At this same moment there was a sound of horses' hoofs, a loud "hullo" from without, a familiar and noisy call, that was almost a roar, and, while Captain Olds peered in the face of the boy standing before him and stricken as by some appalling inner thought, footsteps came along the hall, stamping loudly and blustering and blowing, in came the owner of Shaganappy Ranche, followed by a lady.

"Wheshew! What a jolly good fire! Ha, captain, back again; glad to see you, old boy; didn't expect me, hey? Hullo, Nance! here

you are! Brought you a mistress," and, turning to the lady, who was struggling out of much wrapping, "Captain Olds, Mrs. Toft—Barbara, here's Nancy." The lady emerging from veils and shawls, now became visible. She bowed, with quiet grace, to the captain, and, turning, looked past the young lad standing there, with so harsh an expression on his boyish face, saying eagerly:—

"Where is she, Diloraven?"

Mr. Toft burst into a loud guffaw, so highly amused was he at the question. It took him several moments to recover himself. "There *she* is," he said, pointing to the lad. "Here, Nance, ain't you going to welcome Mrs. Toft? Aren't you glad to see ME?" offering a hand, which it might have been, the gathering dusk hid from Nancy's view. Mrs. Toft was talking to the captain, expressing her ideas of the "awful country" and expostulating with her husband upon his little joke. "I quite expected to find a young woman," she said. "I think the country must be essentially masculine, for beyond that one dainty little lady they call Rough Ben's wife at the Crossing, we have not met a woman since we left Port Ellice."

Captain Olds, with all his mental energies, was trying to conjure up some of the small nothings he was wont to utter to the belles of Bombay, and was shuffling about so uneasily that his friend, the honorable Mr. Toft, exclaimed:—

"Where are your manners, Olds? Will you not assist Mrs. Toft to a seat? Nance, prepare my quarters—make a good fire everywhere—and give me my letters," then, turning to the captain, "this rising seems to be serious, Olds—I thought it would be a mere whiff of wind—that blunderer, Riel, will swing for it; D——n the government of your country. If the like of this happened at home, I tell you we'd pretty soon"—

Captain Olds frowned, meaningly glancing at the lady, who sat in a large easy chair drawn up to the fire, and was lying back in a listening attitude, her eyes closed, hands crossed listlessly, and thought surging, like beating waves, across the deeps of her mind.

"Oh, she isn't afraid!" said Mr. Toft, glancing over his shoulder, "She's not made of the ordinary stuff of your Canadian women, and it's my belief that a horde of Big Bear's best braves will fill her mind with no more than a slight curiosity, eh Barbara?" The lady roused up with a startled look, saying: "Were you speaking to me, Diloraven?"

Mr. Toft laughed. He made no answer to his wife, who resumed her easy position, her eyes following the movements of the lad who now came in bearing a large packet of papers and letters. He placed them upon the table at the hand of Mr. Toft. By this time the supper was ready, and Captain Olds seeing his friend deeply engaged in breaking various seals, offered his arm to Mrs. Toft and led her to the table. The boy crept in and out of the room in a stealthy way during the meal, which proceeded under broken gasps of conversation from the honorable Mr. Toft, interspersed with light questions from the gallant Captain as to the difficulties of the trip overland, and side assurances that there was no such country in the world. Mrs. Toft dreamily listening and nibbling her food was playing with the teaspoon she balanced on the cup's edge. In answer to a query from Mr. Toft the Captain was saying, "They all went into barracks but Nancy and myself. We considered we had nothing to lose but our lives, and"—looking round with a friendly smile to where the lad busied at the sideboard stood with averted face—"there's no one to miss us if we did lose—What's wrong Toft?" This in a violent alarmed way to the master of Shaganappy Ranche, who, his eyes fixed in a wild stare upon the open page of a letter, his hands shaking as with palsy, his face blanche, now reeled in his chair. His wife much alarmed made a movement to go to him, but the look he turned on her checked her steps. He seemed to recover himself with an effort and with a blind motion as if to rise from where he sat, turned away.

Captain Olds had approached him asking:—"Will you have some brandy, Toft?" to which he made no reply; perhaps he did not hear but he said:—"I must go down to Horrocks' immediately—a fresh horse, Nance—My dear"—this to his wife in a softer tone, but without looking at her—"I find it is—imperative—I much regret my immediate—departure—but—I—must. Captain," turning to that gentleman, "will you remain here as my guest until—my return?—I will be back on—Friday." Barbara looked at him while he was speaking in that forced way, all the while steadying himself upon the chair as if faint. Her eyes caught the nervous motion of his hands, which, taking the letter he had read with so much agitation, he tore it into shreds, and leaning over to the fire damper, threw the bits within; the door opening at that moment a whirl of wind swept in, carrying some particles of the torn pieces about the room, as Nancy announced "Potiphar is saddled and waiting, sir!"

The next moment Dillraven Toft was heard galloping away, and his wife in the first hour of her home-coming was left a stranger in a strange land. Captain Olds and Nancy had gone out to assist the owner of Shaganappy off, and Barbara left alone, began to think. Her eye roving aimlessly about the apartment, caught the little bits of white paper, and more with an involuntary feminine instinct of neatness, than any curiosity, she stooped and gathered up the white fragments, holding them loosely in one hand as she drew out the damper to place them upon the fire but her eye seemed suddenly and fiercely to seize upon something written there. Upon the scrap of paper, fast browning while a thin line of flame was eating centrewards she saw "if your child is living." There the thread of flame seized the writing, but with a quick movement she caught up the remaining part, crushing the flame under her fingers, and when she looked again there were the words "your child" before her distraught eyes, and as she looked it crumbled under her touch. What did it mean? Who was Horrocks? The room was very dark now—what meant the sudden departure? Somebody was coming; the flash of a lantern crossed the window and while the footsteps came nearer, Barbara with a quick movement slipped the fragments of the paper within her bosom, and when Captain Olds, followed by Nancy came in, she had regained her natural coldness of manner, but roused within her was the calculating determination of her strong character.

"Who is Horrocks, Captain Olds?" she asked.

"Horrocks?—um—ah,—oh, he's a sort of—well, a sort of—agent—um—yes—an attorney that is—you see, your husband—well, he knew him in London I believe—Horrocks is"—

"*He is a devil!*" This came so suddenly from the lad crouching there stealthily in the shadowy corner that it seemed like some evil spirit uttering a cry of hatred. Captain Olds frowned. "Come, come, Sherald, keep your place—you've been drinking,—Madam" this to the lady who was regarding the crouching form of the boy with fear, "let me take you to the sitting room—or, as my friend Toft calls it, his den." With a hesitating step she passed along the hall and was shown into a well-lit room where every comfort seemed to meet the eye. There was a piano open, and upon the rest, one of Claribel's latest songs; a handsome chandelier, rich curtains of velvet and heavy carpets beneath the feet; low easy-chairs, and heavily-framed drawings—one—a bright-faced baby-boy dressed in a rich frock of lace, and in its eyes the deep dark

look of a face Barbara had now begun to know and—fear. The Captain acted the part of the old beau of Bombay with a new found ease; he recounted old days in the regiment in which he had served; grew garrulous over adventure and incident; related with much enthusiasm an encounter with a Sepoy wherein his life "wasn't worth a button," and squared his shoulders as he told of the days of active service.

All the while his hearer's eyes were fixed on that babe's face. It was laughing down upon her and the somewhat familiar look in the dark eyes seemed repeating the mysterious words: "Your child, your child!"

There was silence for a time. The Captain's thoughts seemed a leaden weight in his brain. The lady seated opposite so absorbed in her own thoughts that she seemed oblivious of his presence—the wind outside was heard to sob and croon; sleet came dashing against the windows, and a terrible silence was over all. "Have you known my husband long?" the query came so abruptly the old gentleman started.

"Ah,—um—oh, yes. Toft came out here in the seventies—I had just come over myself. In fact we fell in with each other on the over-land trip; naturally we were inclined towards each other, being London men"—

"Then you too, are from London?"

"Well, yes. I went out to India in my young days though, my father and Toft's father—the Earl of Steppes you know—were school-mates at Harrow, and although your husband and myself met only once or twice—er—um—well, you see we had heard of each other—and—" the old gentleman grew uneasy, and perhaps to avoid the sharp eye upon him, he rose, slipping his hands under his coat-tails and began walking up and down the room.

"He is almost a—stranger to me;" said Mrs. Toft picking at the silken fringe of a table-drape at hand; you know he was wrecked upon the Shallows in that awful "Anneta" wreck in 1871; we knew him very well in those days—I was quite a small girl then, but Uncle Roger knew him well all those years—and—and—"—the woman's eyes sought the eyes of the brave old officer of a Bombay regiment—eyes that had faced death unflinchingly, and now they drooped.

"Yes," says the old beau soothingly, "er—um—his father is pretty old now—pretty old—I should say Dilly would soon come in for the title"—

"And this—person," says Barbara, as if her thought branched into a new channel, "is he a servant—I mean the lad you call Nancy?"

"Oh, Sherald?" The Captain nodded once or twice, "he drifted here in '72 or thereabouts—had been mining up North, I believe—took fever—sort of malaria common to the climate—his chums went on without him—Toft found him in a sort of shack down here in one of the round-ups; fetched him to the ranche, and he's never left it since. We call him 'Nancy' because of his handy ways, and," rising, the old gentleman added, "I must see whether he has gone off to bed; I think something put him out to-day."

The Captain left the room. The young wife paced about the apartment with agitated step. She paused often before the child's face, contemplating the dark eyes that smiled so familiarly, so vaguely like other eyes she had met—where? The Captain coming in with a puzzled expression on his countenance, while he tried to decipher some writing upon an envelope he held towards the lady, she had not turned from the portrait but was asking:—"Captain Olds, can you tell me what child this is?"

"Eh,—um—oh, I believe—that is, or was your husband—at least he always says when looking at it—'there's a big difference between young Toft and old Toft'. But he's just in his prime—just in his prime; this"—holding out the letter—"seems to be for him too—! It must have fallen from the table where his letters were strewn."

"Why, the ink is wet upon it!" exclaimed Barbara, looking with dismay at her finger tips which had crossed the bold address "Toft," and beneath it in a large fine hand the word "private" was written. "Where did it come from?" asked Mrs. Toft, "it is freshly written—where did you get it?"

"Why, upon my word," ejaculated the bewildered old gentleman, "I—it—it—was lying upon—upon the dining-room table—I—I went to—ah, Nance will be able to tell me about it," and the old gentleman again turned to leave the room.

"Bring the boy to me," said Barbara, "perhaps it is some message of importance—possibly requiring immediate reply—do you think"—looking up at the soldierly old man standing before her, "as—his wife—I—am entitled to—to open his private correspondence?"

"I was just thinking," answered her listener, "thinking it might be a line from Porter—you see—I believe my dear Mrs. Toft, that your

husband's hurried ride to Horrocks' meant serious things—may be word from Middleton! You are a brave woman I know," went on Captain Olds, his eye lighting excitedly, "and I am not afraid to tell you"—he paused—the woman was contemplating him with calm strength—"to tell you," said he, "*that there is danger.*"

"What is the nature of the danger?" There was nothing of fear in the tone.

"The Indians are looting—news has come that Big Bear, with many white prisoners, is making for the North—The Indians have massacred two missionary priests already—and *they may be here at any moment!*"

"And my husband—knew—this?"

"He knew this—that is—I think the letter which so disturbed him was"—

"Then the danger to himself must have seemed greater than the danger to me—his—wife!" There was contempt in the tone.

"No—no," said Captain Olds—"he has doubtless gone with the view to"—he paused, her eyes were fixed on the envelope lying in her hand, and a sound that blanched the face of the old soldier was borne on the night. She had not heard—she had not known the awful import of that low throbbing, never ceasing hum! White of face the old man passed out of the room and with trembling hands fumbling over locks and bars, hoarsely calling "Nancy! Nancy! oh, Christ! They have come!"

Within the room stood Barbara Toft, irresolute. Then, with the words "I am his wife—I have the right," she broke the seal. While her dilated eyes passed over the lines therein written, an awful sound broke on her hearing. The uneven beat of a discordant drum—howls, yells, the snarl of wolf, the yelp of dogs, and before her, standing like some warning spectre, the shaking, white-faced old man, crying: "THE INDIANS!—FLY!—FLY!" She stood there unmoved. In her hands an open page, and in her eyes a look of horror, that spoke more than words could say. The glare of a hellish light flashed through the windows—a roar as of enraged demons let loose—volleys of shot—wild snarls and whoops, yelps and savage shouts; a battering of doors; crashing of glass; the savages had broken in.

"Bring me—the boy—you—call Nancy!" she said, as if deaf to the surrounding din.

"He is--gone--gone!" panted the old officer. "This way--this way--my horse--it is our only chance--come--COME--COME!" He tore at her garments, the fabric gave way in his hands and still she did not move.

"Come! it means DEATH!--*Death and torture*" he shouted, as that hellish hum came nearer and nearer.

"There are worse things than death," she answered, turning to face the black horde now pouring into the room, "and keener suffering than torture!"

It was an awful sight--the fearful maddened riot that followed--the smashing of furniture--the firing of curtains--the looting of boxes--the wild swirl of devilish glee--demoniac dancing over and among the choice wares of Shaganappy Ranche,--and Barbara, borne on this engulfing tide of rage and riot, was carried out into the night. The darkness was lit up by the red flames now devouring what was to have been her happy home. Around her pranced painted braves. Other women's hands robbed her of jewels and clothing. Captain Olds was nowhere to be seen. Barbara was quite passive under their rude hands--hideous squaws danced about in the engulfing flame togged in the splendour of her attire; they mocked her; they jibed her; they cut into the furniture, tearing and destroying what they were unable to carry away; and, as the first faint lines of coming dawn crossed the prairie, Barbara, alone and in the very day of her home-coming, was carried a prisoner away--God alone knew where? Upon the prairie snow the white locks of the old man who had tried to save her--and would not leave her to die alone--straggled upon the cold ground--his arms pinioned--his eyes staring--upon his face he seal of death, the death she craved, but which would not come.

CHAPTER VII.

We have left Tom Windsor for so long a time, that it becomes us as chronicler and story-builder, to leave all other *personæ* in retirement, and return to the real hero of our tale. In order to do so we must use the means of pervestigation admittedly belonging to those who assume to reproduce the innermost thoughts of other people.

Life without Barbara, to whom he had devoted the best years of his life? The future without Barbara, who was the one thread woven in his being? Fame without Barbara to reflect it? Success, and Barbara not to share it? Of what use was it all?

These were Tom's thoughts leaving Cozydean, dumb with the anguish of disappointment; Barbara's coldness; her renunciation of him because he had not succeeded! He did not want success now; he would work for success no longer. He saw Dilraven Toft go up the steps with the insolent swagger of easy familiarity. Aye, the best horse had won!

Tom walked on up the hillside, beyond the limits of Carters' Fields, over the long bridge spanning an ugly dark gully, out of which dark thoughts crept. The awful desolation in his heart seemed to have overreached its power of pain, and a leaden sensation weighted thought. He sat down on a high piece of ground and cast a dull eye over the little town lying below. Grey-white mist rose and hung above the frozen Shallows, lying still and white there. The waters of that dangerous tide were still and safe looking, but there was an under-current rushing on and on, deep, deep, down below! So it was in Tom's thoughts—under the calm of his despair there was a tide of mad resolve: *He must end it all now.* He sat there until the last lights went out in the town, sat there through the long cold night hours. At last dawn came sliding over the snowy mountains, breaking in jagged lumps of light between the whitened trees. The houses below seemed to nod and yawn as if rising from a restless sleep, and looked ghastly in the sunrise. So it was with Tom—he had awakened from a long dream and the waking was hard. The mill bell began to ring in an exasperating way, and from numerous points the mill-hands appeared, turning townwards, and behind the last

man, followed Tom. He reached his office and went in, locking the door behind him. Jerry had not come yet to sweep and dust. When Jerry came what would he see? The room was cold, with a chill that was not wholly physical discomfort. He moved about with a stealthy step as if he might waken some one who would interfere with his thought; he stood motionless, his eye fixed on something darkly outlined against the wall. Barbara! He moved back a step as his hand reached out and upwards towards that dark thing. Barbara! He pushed aside the small desk whereon lay the pages of his unfinished novel; some books noisily crashed down and he started guiltily; but again his eye went back to that shadowed thing against the wall. Barbara! He sank back upon a chair as a cheery whistle broke suddenly upon his ear and a fumbling hand gave evidence that Jerry was in attendance for the morning duties; Marlinsford would be here directly, and Jerry was growing impatient, so the door was opened by trembling hands to admit him, and he brought in some new feeling akin to peace. "Mornin' sir," was Jerry's greeting, his bright face turned to his employer with a frank honest look, "hev' ye bin writin' all night Mr. Windsor?" asked Jerry, noting the wan face of his master.

"I've been dreaming, Jerry," said Tom, "dreaming."

"That's jest the way of me too sir," said the lad; "I be's that tired w'en the days is over, what ov washin' up an' a-splittin' of slabs an' keepin' the fambly straight"——

"Dear me" said Tom, wakening up, "you surely are not so beset by cares as all that?"

"W'y sir, I've on'y got me juty," says Jerry with a sheepish bang of his shock head, "an' a feller 'udn't be worth much as didn't foller his juty." With this unconscious thrust Jerry began a search in dusty corners and Tom left the office determined to be at least worthy of "follerin' his juty." Jerry with his pinched face and unconscious words had preached a sermon beyond the eloquence and power of pulpit.

Tom took the "long way 'round" that morning; his early-late comings in had ceased to be a surprise. A haggard face must needs be a result of all-night pen-labour, so this morning Mrs. Windsor was somewhat surprised at finding her son come in at the regular breakfast hour, and she fluttered anxiously out to the kitchen to prepare with her own hands some special dainty and worthy her clever son. She had

looked with jealous eyes upon the blotted pages of manuscript left about the house, but too, she hoped for the time when "Tom's book" would bring him fame. She thought it a great pity his father had insisted on Tom taking up the law. So many years had been wasted! Marlinsford—Tom's partner, was suited to the humdrum profession, but her clever boy had genius and his genius must one day show in his book.

"You've been working all night again, my dear," observed Mrs. Windsor uncovering a delectable morsel of fish, "and how does your book come on?" The lady began a noiseless shuffle of sugar and cream jugs.

Tom laughed as he answered unsteadily:—"The book mother? Oh that is done with—forever."

"Oh, Tom my dear!" ejaculated the grave-faced little woman dropping a spoon with a joyous clatter, "I *am* so glad, so thankful! ah, it is a great privilege to be—to be;—two lumps this morning?"

"I think I've done with scribbling, mother, for——a time at least. You see a man can't drop his bad habits all at once; but that case of the Intercolonial is coming on soon, and we can't let those big St. John fellows beat us, can we little mother?" There was something very unreal about Tom's humor Mrs Windsor thought, and seeing the fish still untouched she became mildly insistent:—"Now, now! And fish is so brain-giving! I had it cooked purposely for you, won't you nibble it even? Jerry brought it early this morning, for Master Tom, he said."

"The fish is A I mother, and Jerry shall be a chief justice yet, if he continues to catch such fish!" and he was off without having touched the food, at which the elderly lady became thoughtfully sad, then sat down to mend some linens by a window; to sigh and say to herself:—"If they were married—it would be better—my poor boy, this drudgery of the law; if he were settled down and had children about him?" The sighs went in with the needle and some tears went in with the threads. Late that day, news of Barbara's approaching marriage with the honorable Dilraven Toft, reached Mrs. Windsor, and she then understood the haggard look of her son that morning, and she was so kind, so obtrusively good and thoughtful, never naming Barbara or the book, and betraying such a sudden interest in the Intercolonial R'y case, that it almost broke Tom's heart to see her trying thus to help him bear his disappointment.

Oh! ye who are troubled in mind, body or estate, try *work* as a par-

acea! With Work the Furies may be defied, and by Work the worst of Pandora's gifts be neutralized.

The famous case of the X. Y. Z. versus the Intercolonial Ry., and the legal fight to a finish by two quite unknown practitioners against an imposing array of grey-headed learning brought from the City of St. John, is still talked of on both sides of the Shallows. Marlinford worked faithfully, and Tom, poor heart-breaking, hope-wrecked Tom, tried to forget by throwing himself with all his heart and mind and energy into the fight. He said to himself, that for him all ambition, all future, was over. He had no future now, he wanted none; so he worked with no object in view but one—he wanted to forget. And Tom found he had able minds to cope with. He discovered an adroit skill which must be combatted. He believed in *facts*, while the St. John talent relied upon oratory. To bamboozle a jury is a high art in legal circles, and can be wrought out to a degree of perfection by a brilliant pleader; but to Tom's mind, facts were the thing to be most relied on, and he considered facts should be respected, if rights were to be recognized at all; and while dreaming Tom shook off the sorrow by force of will, and threw himself into the case, sparing neither strength nor anything else, the honorable Dilraven Toft carried away to the golden West the one woman out of all the world of women whom Tom could ever, or would ever love. She had sent a tearful short letter once since that evening he last saw and spoke to her—a few-lined letter pleading 'to be forgotten,' she did not 'want to be a hindrance, a drag to him.' Tom twisted the weak little appeal up in a fierce looking corkscrew-shaped thing, then threw it with the manuscript of his book into the blaze of the office stove, and the roar that went up the chimney with the Lady Edora and Sir Pooh was really alarming; but Tom drowned it by trolling out bravely and in his best notes, "If she be not fair to me what care"—but the rest was lost in a moan that broke from the man's strong heart; the lock of the tide of tears gave way, and Tom, great fellow that he was, sat there crying blessed boyish tears that washed away a good deal of the woe and bitterness, and carried on its tide some new glint of peace.

By some odd coincidence the great case was fixed for the very day on which Barbara became Mrs. Toft. At the very hour indeed. And while Tom was cracking the arguments of his learned opponents by a statement of facts, so clear, so convincing, in argument so conclusive, and appeal so mild, yet impassioned, with findings so unassailably staunch, that

the jury—who had every one of them known Tom as a small boy, and being hardy, honest yeomen themselves, weren't going to allow their sympathies to be overbalanced by "them there Big-wigs from over yander, as come to talk honest folk against our own boys!" Indeed, the "big-wigs" began to whisper together among themselves during this unknown young pleader's astute reasoning; nodding unconscious approval at odd points directed with telling effect against themselves and the X. Y. Z. cause. In short, with no thought of it, with no wish for it, no desire for it—Tom Windsor found himself famous. The case was closed. The jury proved themselves loyal to reason and home talent. The Intercolonial was victorious, and showed its appreciation of Tom's efforts by the payment of a cheque so big and so unexpected, that Tom gasped when he looked at it and then upon his lip trembled one word only, that word was—"Barbara!"

Not only this, but Tom was made solicitor for that great corporation—the Intercolonial. Tallings, who was a Q.C. and bore other alphabetical honors, and who had led the forlorn hope of the X. Y. and Z. cause, promptly offered this "clever young fellow" a partnership in his firm—a leading one it was too. Friends gathered about him, congratulations poured in, the tide of luck seemed to almost submerge Tom, who, less than a week ago hadn't a hope. Then a Q.C. parchment appeared in a neat frame upon the office wall, and it seemed as if his good luck had brought all the rest of the Daltonby world to war, so vast was the business that poured in, not only that, but briefs from far-away places came to Daltonby's shore, and Mrs. Windsor looked out upon the smiling Shallows where her husband had gone down in that cruel crawling foam-wave, and sighed "Ah! if his poor father had lived to see this great day!"

Terrible tidings from the West came. Accounts of mad violence of the rebels led by the irresponsible Reil. Among the first who enrolled their names and went out to defend their country's rights, was Tom Windsor, who led "The Shamrock Leaf." The boys of the "Shamrock Leaf" started out one morning just as the mill bell called the men from the hill-side to go to work among the alabs. With the "Shamrock Leaf" went Jerry—marching in the shadow of his captain, Tom Windsor—a big drum slung before him, and his eyes wide with the determination to distinguish himself in the Great Lone Land. War was over the land—homes were made desolate—women were imprisoned and forced along with cruel captors—priests were murdered—chur-

ches burnt—men shot down in the sight of agonized wives, and Tom, with one thought only in his heart went out to protect, to fight for, and if need be, *die* for the spot which one woman out of all the world, called home. And the lads of the "Shamrock Leaf" went out of dear Daltonby, went out to the time marked by Jerry's drum and to the weeping note of sorrow from the homes which some of them would never see again.



CHAPTER VIII.

The express rushing into Regina, the prairie capital, was shrieking resentment it might be, at being eight hours late. The hours after leaving Qu'Appelle station had been joyous-sad hours to Gracie. Was she not within—almost within reach of her husband's arms, and had not the last link between her and the old happy life at Daltonby been broken? She began to think she had not seemed sorry when saying good bye to Ma Haddam, who wept over her in that last embrace, and said "God bless you my daughter." Too, she reflected upon having angered kind Uncle Roger, by insisting on going on to Townley at once, strong in that determination, although Uncle Roger advised her remaining at Qu'Appelle until her husband came for her, Gracie's argument against this suggestion being: "Was her husband not a soldier; was not a soldier's first duty his country, and was not the duty of a soldier, his wife's duty? So, while the authoritative old gentleman fussed about, swearing against the rebellion and vowing that Gracie would not leave his protection until he saw her safely in Townley's care, although his property at Battleford was in imminent danger; but such losses the dear old gentleman counted nothing as against the brave little wife's safety. He had to content himself by insisting on her acceptance of a fat roll of bills, and while he kept the wires between Qu'Appelle and the Mounted Police headquarters, ticking frantic calls on constable Haddam constable Haddam's wife stepped on board the train and waved last good byes.

Uncle Roger and the honorable Dilraven Toft separated at Qu'Appelle, the latter with his wife going straight on to the Saskatchewan, while Mrs. Haddam in her brother-in-law's care, prepared for the journey to Battleford.

With a crunching of wheels, shrieking of whistles and ringing of bells, the train drew into the neat station. Uncle Roger had wired Townley to meet his wife, and through the glad mist of tears, two eager eyes watched for the young soldier husband. Passengers were leaving the cars and exchanging queries, but out of the subdued bustle no familiar face appeared. The porter gathered up shawl-strap and valise

and gently hurried Gracie into the open air. Hurrying men, lounging youths—everywhere decided movements—except one little woman standing looking in a bewildered way about her. With a shriek the cars were off again, laying before Gracie's view a queer huddled-up little town where it seemed that the houses were dodging each other in a game of architectural hide-and-seek. They were built on streets that sidled along in a zig-zag fashion and crossed each other in a way suggestive of geometrical propositions. Hampered by her many parcels, the little woman decided to follow in the wake of a portly old gentleman making his way familiarly to a much-added-to structure with the sign "Palmer House" upon it. A smudgy lad blockaded the entrance with an enormous valise, and in answer to Gracie's timid knock, paused in his efforts to ~~shoulder the same to say: "This way 'm," and beginning the ascent of~~ a narrow stairway. Smudgy pointed the way to an open door at the extreme end of a very long and very narrow corridor, where she sat down, and a moment later was interrogated by her guide as to "w'ether ye mout be wantin' a room—co's ther' wasn't none—they was chock-up-full 'n runnin' over; folks a cumin' frum the Front, sleepin' four deep, so they was," plaintively averring without a blush he "hedn't hed his own blessed clo's off fer mor'n eight weeks"—which statement though alarming, from every evidence of the senses seemed probable. The little woman requested to see the land-lady, upon which Smudgy with a broad grin said: "he wa'n't up yet," but hinted at "hevin' him inter his boots in three shakes ov a lam's tail!"

It seemed to the tired little woman, waiting in the small room, (and not quite decided whether to laugh or cry) that a great many lambs might have gone through the recommended calisthenic exercise of wagging their tails, over and over again, before an elderly gentleman, with a tremendous length of beard, but with a kind face and manner, came in. He looked interested when he learned that the lady's husband expected her; became somewhat grave when he heard the name, and grew silent and anxious-eyed when she asked to be furnished a conveyance to be taken to barracks.

"I will be back in a moment, madam," he said, and again she was left alone. The minutes went by draggingly slow, and the tired, little woman almost broke down. Why did not her husband come? Had he received her letters? Where was Ma Haddam now? How glad she was she had not let Uncle Roger's advice prevail. Where! oh where was

her husband? He must surely come soon. Someone *was* coming! Down the long hallway came a double footstep. Her heart was beating like a prisoned bird; the clank of a spur! A firm, light step, a blur of red jacket that hesitated at the door. Blinded by joy, she made a step forward reaching out trembling hands——. The arms fell—the glad eager light of the eyes went out suddenly, yet she held her breath waiting to hear that he was coming. The roaring sound in her ears lessened, the mild-faced man was looking at her pityingly, he was offering her a chair—what did it all mean. What was the boyish lad in the regimentals saying?

"B. division was ordered out a week ago, and went into the fight at Fish Creek yesterday." "*Gone!*" she did not cry out nor faint, though both men sprang forward to catch her as she reeled. She walked with uncertain step up to the red-jacketed lad, and looked in his face so pathetically, with so dumbly disconsolate an expression, that he flinched in his gaze. He was a brave Quebec boy, and would not quail though facing death and the cannon fire, but the mute anguish of the girl-woman's woe touched the quick of his soldier heart. No need to tell of the anguished after hours of that sad day, of the after days that followed, the weary, weary waiting for news; the morning walks to the post office, when, one day her heart gave a convulsive bound as a white square was handed to her, and then hope seemed to die out altogether, to find it was *only from home*. Almost without interest she opened it. It was from her mother, the beginning an extravagant blare about the double wedding. "Such an ado! She hoped never again to pass through so distressing an ordeal! The trousseau, the breakfast, the wedding gown, the wedding cake, the trip, a trip to Geneva; where was Geneva? Heaven only knew where Geneva was, but it was there Count Yollop had his castle on the Rhine—it must be there, for, of course, they had nothing but castles on the Rhine. To think of one of her children being mistress of a castle at Geneva, while one was a common soldier's wife—but thank Heaven, if Townley did make a slip, he made it like a *gentleman!*" In other words, Mrs. Bloomsbury was glad it was no petty bit of stealing, but a genteel robbery of thousands. Gracie put down the letter with some feeling like shame, but when the dusk fell and eerie shadows began to form queer shapes in the corners of the little bedroom, she took out the foolish, rambling letter and kissed it. It was the only link that held now between her and her happy girlhood days.

Morning always brought with it hope renewed; blessed sunlight that robs grief of its pain and sorrow of its sting. 'Another week gone,' thought Gracie, seated one morning in the dining-room and some little thrill of alarm was awakened as she remembered that only Uncle Roger's gift, now stood between her and absolute want. "I must begin to look out for quieter quarters and"—hot tears fell, but she determined under no circumstances to be weak, and she resolutely gave her attention to a shaggy, bronzed man seated at the same table, enjoying with voracious appetite, a breakfast, while he gave to a bearded companion in language unknown to the polite gods, news from the north:—"Yes, siree!" he was saying, "met 'em at Touchwood goin' like blaz's—hosses most con-nipshuned frum goin' night an' day—Quinn shot in his tracks, an' the whole blank horde of 'em riz, lootin' like blank an' scalpin' 'n burnin'. By blank," the burly fellow said, thumping the table until the dishes chimed—"By blank, sir, I b'leeve they'll wipe out th' p'leece!"

A wail from the white-faced little woman, drew the burly fellow's attention. He leaned over saying in a thundering voice:—"No 'ffence, 'm, but might *you* hev' some one up north? I ain't no melancholy gib-cat, but I purdicts onless guv'ment deals 'th them red divils like they'd deal 'th snakes, ther's goin' t' be scalps enuff took in this here country t' fence the hul' peraries!"

"I would like—to know about—the—the police," a trembling little voice said.

"Poleece? Well 'm the blanked truth ov it is, ther' givin' the boys h—ll!"

Without noting the distress his words were causing, the huge fellow went on to say he "he'd cum from Batoche a-cartin' supplies fer the boys, but blank his eyes, ef he was Middleton, he'd cart up bullets a 'stead of beef, an'"—Mr. Bottle's intention was swallowed before he had time to express it, and a small hand was reaching out to ask with a little gasp:—"B division—did he know about B division?"

"B division? A' course! Why, B division went into the fight two days ago—didn't she see the speshul?" Mr. Bottle's war upon the vic-tuals ceased. He was producing a paper from a deep pocket when the dining-room door swung open. There was a buzz from the bar-room beyond, whence came the odor of beer and bad language—the cracking of billiard balls sounded to her intensified hearing like shots firing; but the

burly Mr. Bottles claimed her attention to the printed page by a very black thumb. He was reading :

"Six killed over forty wounded. Those killed were de Manolly, W. Cook, Private A. W. Ferguson, J. Hutchins, G. Wheeler and W. Ennis. Wounded"—

Mr. Bottle's eye was fixed on the page and following his thumb with so much earnestness that he did not see the frail girl-woman creeping up to him, her breath coming in thick gasps, her small fingers interlocked and outreaching, her hand touched his arm and the blue eyes, wide with fear were fixed on his face as he rolled out the names. But she imploringly sighed, "tell me, is Constable—Haddam?"—

Mr. Bottle's thumb took a jump and fixed itself at a spot lower down while he turned to survey the face upturned and expectant. He laughed as he repeated "Cunstible Haddam? A'course his name's here, but assy, ye'll never see *Constable* Haddam no more, he"—

"By G—— I've killed her!" yelled the son of the plains, stooping over the little woman who had fallen at his feet like a bit of sod.

"Here you are Bottles! Off with you! Hosses prancin' for to be off, and chewin' the'r bits to be goin'—come, look lively, no time to lose." The next moment Ben Bottles, seated astride a front barrel and going along the trail was vowing vengeance on himself "fer a gol-durn-son-of-a—" something awful to hear, shaking his shaggy head and confiding to himself "it must a' bin the blanked gal's sweetheart, blank his eyes if it mustn't a' bin!" and Mr. Bottles followed up this reflection by the declaration: "If it was'nt fer the little gal up yander he would'nt go a-near the blanked country agin, no more he would'nt."

They were very kind to Gracie. She was placed in a chair, and faces full of respectful sympathy bent over her as her eyes opened to consciousness. But she wanted to be alone, wanted to cry out the trouble of her widowed heart, so she staggered out of the room and up to her little chamber where she put on hat and cloak and then went out into the morning air. There was a wide waste of whitened prairie beyond the huddled houses. She turned south and passed from the town, out far out over the hillocky sweep, with no thought of destination or purpose, only to go on, on, on. Why was her lot so hard? Dead! The cruel savages; oh, why did not the troops ride on them and trample them down? The remorseless savages—ah, they too had wives and mothers and—unborn babes! Oh, cruel, cruel war; defacing this young and beautiful

land with bloody hand—the beautiful land! The town was now far far behind. A narrow thread-like stream of frozen water barred the way, and she sat down by its sloping bank and looked at the frescoed waves icebound below. She was so alone—her husband was dead. He had fallen a soldier, and as a soldier's wife, she must stand firm in the battle of life now before her. She had no where to go—no home—but the God of the widow and fatherless was there. Her mist-dimmed eyes looked upwards and she saw that the dull splendour of the sun was now fast passing to the West. She looked back along the way she had come, and it seemed as if the rays of the departing glory of day hovered over one particular bright spot—caught and held with glittering glow the sunset glory. Gracie watched the scintillous object and she moved forward as one fascinated. As she neared the glittering thing she observed beneath it a form outlined. Upon the white-draped figure amber-tinted lights were reflected and nearing it she saw it was a woman, and holding in her arms a Child. Something like the seed of a new hope took root in the heart of this lone little woman, and as she looked, tears, grateful tears rained down her face. There too stood a mother. She had wandered homeless, not knowing where to lay her head, and in a lowly stable at Bethlehem the *Son of Man* was born! And this calm-faced Mother was looking down, surely with pitying eyes. The Child resting there within the arms, reaching fingers that surely beckoned. Gracie looked again, but the flood of loneliness burst from her in a sad and overwhelming tide, and seeing an open doorway beneath the figures standing there all lonely like herself, she crept therein, and saw within, a dim light suspended before a white table rich in blossoms and bright in a golden sheen. She sat down, bending her head upon trembling hands and wept quietly. A low murmuring sound roused her and she looked up. Within a low railing a kneeling figure was repeating in low whispering tones. "*Saint Marie mère de Dieu.*" The half articulate words wasted down the empty aisles and some vague remembrance caused Gracie's troubled mind to leap back to that day at St. Anne's in the little old quaint church when—"Saint Marie mère de Dieu"—overwhelmed by this happy-sad flood-tide of thought, and wearied by the long tramp over the uneven prairie, the little sad heart weakened, and with a weak cry she fell forward heavily.

CHAPTER IX.

April was beginning to show signs of wane when the "*Shamrock Leaf*," alert and determined struck the trail for the long march northwards from Swift Current. The boyish eyes that looked their last upon the dear old Shallows, filled with some new and undefined anxiety. "Little Poplar" with his lodges had that day, it was learned, joined Big Bear, and fugitive settlers carrying their young children and what portable possessions they had time to lay hold of, were met at the various distances on the march, and all reported the greatest danger to those in the north. The Indians were plundering and raiding settlers' homes, and Tom pressed on almost continuously. Jerry, with his big eyes looking into the future had one thought only: He must prove himself a soldier and worthy of his noble captain, Tom. The level plain seemed to be the Valley of Peace where never a discordant sound might be heard; but, alas! the roar of cannon filled the air with horror and the fierce war-cry dimmed the new land with unavailing tears. The second day out they came upon mounted Indians who had their families and their tents, going to seek shelter from the white man—the friend he had betrayed. It was just dawn when the line was formed for marching. The sun, like some grand Magi unfolding rich draperies in a dazzling splendour burst through the firmly mist-like Dawn, and lo! it was prairie Day. Another day, and about noon a dark line moving due north, under a careful sweep of Captain Tom's glass was reported to be a detachment of mounted soldiery and fast coming up. In less than an hour the dark line took recognizable shape. A signal was given and answered. A bright red thread extending along the line proclaimed them mounted police, and as they dashed up Tom was struck dumb by hearing: "Hullo, Windsor!" while a familiar pair of brown eyes met his own dismayed sight, and a regimental arm crossed by two bright stripes reached out and he was face to face with Corporal Townley Haddam! The while Tom stared in dumb and startled recognition, a certain young recruit regardless of army rules kept up such a tapping of the big drum, all the while real home sick tears (glad indeed of an outlet) surged through eyelashes,

and thumped himself into notice, fairly hugging "Master Townley's" striped legs that looked so grand, tipped as they were with big spurs that out-shone all minor glory. A general handshaking, and a hurried leave-taking took place, for Townley's division was to make a certain point by night-fall. Townley had asked Tom with such a tightening of the breath: "At home, Tom—you left all well?" And Tom was so upset by the question, remembering he had omitted the courtesy of asking after Townley's young wife, blurted out in a blundering way: "Oh, yes—yes, quite well, but do you think Gracie—your wife, will take to military life?" Corporal Haddam was staring at Captain Tom as the order to 'march' was given, but lingered to say:—

"Was she—of course, I mean my wife, Windsor—was she anxious when she heard of the trouble out here?"

Roused to a sense of some misunderstanding and knowing some misapprehension existed Tom said:

"Your wife! Why, Haddam, your wife left Daltonby for Regina, let's see! Oh, yes, of course—she left the day Toft and his wife, with Roger Haddam, started for the Saskatchewan."

"Good God!" Townley's face was covered with beaded sweat, as his wild eyes appealed to Tom, "I have been on duty since the 5th," said Townley. "I have not had any word—any letters"———

The poor boy was silent, and Tom saw the great tears gather in the boyish eyes as, his glance following the fast departing line ahead and a fond look back over the road he had come, passed with some sudden thought:—"Tom! In God's name, what will I do?"

"Do your duty!" said Tom, pointing ahead.

Wounds of the human heart do not show, they bleed silently, deeply, Only the kind physician, Time, may look therein with healing glance.

Flying scouts, refugees in the distance, and now and then a horseman like a meteor passing, told of the unrest that hung over the western land. Two scouts, bearing dispatches, camped that night for a couple of hours, and told of ravages in Battleford. The Hudson's Bay stores there were raided, and the houses of the quaint little town were despoiled; and from Eagle Hills word of murder and plunder. The story of broken homes, flying settlers, burning houses, the grief of widows and orphans fired the blood of the *Shamrock Leaf* boys. They pressed on, their faces set, determined.

A small speck rose against the far-off rim of horizon.⁶ It seemed to curve as the swallow does, describing a half arc against the blue. They watched, thinking it might be a renegade Indian, when, suddenly, other specks came into view, and all the yellow light was dotted by the same moving objects. The first seen was surely leading, coming straight on, the specks following after, closing in a dark line and ever nearing.

"I think this may mean mischief, lads," said Tom, giving the order to prepare arms. Captain Tom's order was promptly answered, and, at a word, they formed into line and stepped out. The rider came on steadily. It was evident that it was pursued and pursuing. A single rider speeding for life and a dozen savages behind! A cherry-red spot came in Captain Tom's face. The hour for duty had come. The *Shamrock Leaf* boys dashed forward, the lines parting as the flying rider dashed between the sundered ranks, which closed immediately to meet the pursuing Indians with a volley from their Winchesters. The Indians, with a wild yell, discharged some random shots, with deadly effect, and three of the *Shamrock Leaf* boys fell, one wounded to death. The savages, well mounted, were soon beyond the reach of shot, and kind hands were attending to the breathless rider, a mere lad, who gasped out the word that he had for two days been close followed. The wounded were attended to, and one poor fellow, Harry Payne, only lived to murmur "mother" once, and then close his eyes in the sleep that knows no waking.

The boy rider lay upon a blanket, looking about him in a shy, sad way; slender browned fingers interlaced closely above his breast, but no sound of pain from his white lips came. The poor little pony drooped its head and moved about nibbling the new grass with a grateful whinny.

"Poor Brandyboy!" sighed the lad, looking up at the rough-coated friend. "You brought me here—to die!"

"What's that?" asked Captain Tom, leaning down with tender glance, "you said you were not wounded. Can you come on with us do you think—when you are rested?"

"Let me lie here," the lad said, and the sharpening glance of death seemed to lose its power, the features softened with a new and childish expression that touched Tom's heart. Jerry, always shadowing his captain, began to whimper now. He crept to the side of the lad, and took up one hand timidly and kissed the fingers, fast stiffening by the touch of death. He held the small hand, because in no other way could he

express his sorrow for another's grief. Tears oozed from the dying lad's eyes.

"Let me stay with him, Mister Tom," pleaded Jerry—and stay Jerry did, with ten stout companions, well-armed, to care for the wounded, while the rest went on to seek help or to lend it. It was a lonely night for the watchers on that lonely prairie. A new-made grave for Harry Payne, and beside it, wounded men muttering in fitful fevered sleep that haply barred remembrance. At dawn, Jerry was found sleeping soundly the happy sleep of tired youth, and lying upon his brown curls was the hand of the dead lad, as if in loving good-bye. The two faces strangely similar in shape, the brown curls and the brown locks so alike, that as they slept, the one in eternity's last long rest, the other in smiling unconsciousness. Those who looked on wondered.

They lifted Jerry up and covered that other still form, and observed a wet little pool upon the snowy grass. It was blood. The lad *was* wounded then, and when one placed his hand within the lad's bosom whence the blood came, he shouted: "*Boys! It's a woman!*"

CHAPTER X.

"*Sainte Marie mère de Dieu.*" The monotone fell on Gracie's ears and seemed to waken into new life--throbbing pulsating life, memory. She looked up. Where was the high dim light which she last looked upon?

"*Sainte Marie mère de Dieu.*"--again it floated up, and with the low cadence came little waves of thought that rolled and surged and swept on, carrying in its tide bits of bracken memory that seemed to catch for a moment on the understanding, then drift away, away. She wondered why it was she was lying there. She tried to disentangle the baffling past from the bewildering present. Then curiosity melted into passive indifference and she closed her eyes.

"*Sainte Marie mère de Dieu.*" Again thought like a small disc of light in the mind's gloom, grew and strengthened. It broadened, deepened, then gushed into full sensibility, and on pinions of pain memory returned.

Above her bent a black-robed figure, two enfolding arms wherein nestled THE CHILD! Was it that same divine figure beckoning her on? A sense of suffocation overcame her; a sound as of whirling winds; huge waves of engulfing waters overwhelmed, and out of the sinking of the mind came a cry, a weak small cry that called back her soul, and caused the blood to leap in a mad tide along the current of her life--the life fast ebbing out to the unknown.

"Ma petite! ah chère, elle vit! elle vit! Oh, Jesu!" The slight black-draped form bent closer, another pair of eyes peered down upon her--such kindly eyes--while a volley of hushed words were exchanged and she saw another black-robed form standing there. It was like the shadow of itself, but taller and more bent.

The uncertain light suddenly brightened, lighting up the room, and distinctly traced upon the face above her, a look that was not strange. Through the parted curtains a shaft of yellow sunlight came slanting down, enveloping the twin shadows standing there, reminding Gracie of a painting she had once seen of two angels, sheathed in the "glory that

is not of earth." Were they, too, angels, and was she ——— ? But the one was crooning in a low hum-m-m swaying back and forth, and that other graver face anxiously bent on her, raised two locked hands breathing "Oh, bon Dieu ! elle vit ! elle vit !"

Then the faces, strangely alike, turned each to the other, the one hearing the babe went away, seemed to float away, and taking up one of the listless hands with a tender reverential touch, she heard a voice say : "Le bon Dieu ! Il donne la vie ! ma petite ! you are agalús of de world ! Dieu remercie !"——

"Where——am——I?"

"Ah, bon Dieu ! eh ? ma petite ! vous êtes entre les mains du bon Dieu ! moi, l'humble instrument." The small head bent reverentially. The arms in the loose black sleeves crossed over the bosom, and the soft voice went on :—"I am de priest of de Holy Marie de la neige. Ma tante—she haf la petite dame—dead—wit the door off d'e'glise ! Jesu ! I haf peur !" The movement, the voice, the upraised hands rose up 'n Gracie's mind—rose like some lost thread, which might, if caught, bind together the broken fragments of bewildered thought. Dreamily, mistily, away went memory on new-born wings over long-lost paths—where ? The voice, with small ejaculations interspersed, flowed on :—

"Eh, bien ! Ma tante she haf made de resolve—I haf call Monsieur le docteur—mais, ma tante"—— Away went the struggling thought again ; this time on no uncertain wavering wing, but on—straight on : The Shallows under a bright June sun, gay flags, a white-sanded beach, wide grass-grown country roads—a tall spire with its shining cross from whence chimes rang out, notes that fell like dew from Joy. A rough grey quarried wall—au arching open door. The solemn chant within—"Kyrie-e-e-leison !"——dim lights, like stars at dawn——
"Holy Church, open de arms pour l'etrangère"——

"*Father Damien !*" The words burst from Gracie's lips, and two small fever-worn hands reached pitifully out.

The little priest with dilated eyes was staring in questioning fear. La petite had said many strange wild things in the delirium, but did his ears hear aright ? Did this stranger call his name ?

"Ah, Pere Damien ?—Do—you—re-mem-ber—Saint—Anne's?"

Two crimson buds burst new-born into bloom upon the pallid hollow cheeks. She was smiling now and looking up at him ; smiling through tears that rose from the heart's fountain filled with joy-grief.

The little priest was breathing hard ; gradually bending over until he slipped to his knees, while one hand half extended—wherein a rose-leaf palm lay—shook as with palsy.

"Sainte Anne's!" he gasped, "*est ce que c'est une miracle!*" His head fell forward. A slanting bar of yellow sunlight touched the shaven crown, and hovered about the bowed head like a benediction. So they remained in silent prayer. The one bowed with a deep thankfulness, the other prostrate with grateful praise ; both hearts lifted to the All-Merciful in commingled prayer.

Ma tante now glided in, bearing a small squirming bunch which she allowed to nestle close into Gracie's own heart, bringing with its presence new throbbings of thankfulness. She had to be told over and over again that the morsel of mitehood was her very own, and already several days on the long journey of life. There was nothing else to think about now. This bit of pink helplessness filled every void. It brought in its clinging curling fingers seeds of new hope. The round wonder-wide eyes blinked wisely and seemed to say :—"I assume all the responsibilities, cares and anxieties of life—I have come into the world for that grave purpose—believe in me." And Gracie did believe.

Ma tante wore her days out in many and oft repeated trips to 'ma petite,' and was voluble in her ejaculations when she learned that ma petite was 'the same mon neveu did in the grande mistake, make de mariage dans l'e'glise de Sainte Anne!' Oh! grand Dieu! Monseigneur did not forgif dat! Monseigneur did not forgif dat de mistake—*jamais!* 'It wass de grande penitence pour mon neveu, l'ouvrage, it wass har-dle. He must, to-morrow, to make the journey to the Wood Mountain. It wass many cold miles, vrai; mais, les pauvres sauvages, mus' haf de consolation du Sainte Sacrement; ah, Dieu! La prairie she wass not belle, like charmante Sainte Anne!'

While ma tante talked, nodding her small head, and while she talked, waving the thin old hands, Gracie was crying softly. It was then her thoughtless yet trusting marriage on that happy day at St. Anne's, so long ago, that caused Perè Damien to be sent under ecclesiastical frown into exile? She was so happy that June day, and now? Nothing but woe had come of it. He was dead; her soldier husband was dead—and she was alone.

Ma tante was chattering on:—

" Ah, it was le bon Dieu que dirigea les piéds errants ; Sainte Marie ! she did say would beckon ? Dieu ! les arondelles ne peuvent pas tomber ! And to think, c'était la même enfant avic laquelle mon neveu did make le sacrement de mariage ? Monseigneur did not forgif, it was pour mon neveu fait la penitence humiliante ! dix-quatorz ans dans la belle Sainte Anne—et maintenant devant nous la prairie remplie de danger ; et le jolô garçon e'tait mort ? Quelle malheur ! Sif n'était pas mort dans le selu de notre bonne mere la saint e'glise ! "

Ma tante discoursed uninterruptedly and earnestly :—" La chère petite enfant ! Hâtons nous de la baptiser. Eli, bien immédiatement. It was une aîné—une petite aîné that did come to the door de la maison de Dieu et demande la protection ! Bien ! il faut le baptiser immédiatement ! " And away bustled ma tante to find *mon neveu* who was pacing the small room below, breviary in hand, his fingers locked beneath the book, his eyes closed ; his soul in grateful pain raised to Him who " moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform. " Ma tante passed into the outer department without speaking — she nodded briskly, many times glancing in, always retiring without saying any of the many things that surged within her perturbed mind.

The next morning Père Damien, his prairie schooner well stocked with provisions, his tent bed snugly strapped on behind, his small tent-stove with its smaller pipe, finding its outlet through a cunning hole in the canvas roof ; went out alone across the prairies on the long journey to Wood Mountain. Ma tante had prepared everything with trembling hands, sighing a great deal, and dropping the preparations to make frequent visits to the little church, where, under the dim light that burned before the high altar, she knelt and prayed. Then away to add to the store of cakes and loaves ; then to look over the frayed soutanne lest some small worn spot should escape her watchful eyes ; then a trip upstairs to *ma petite* to express her fears and grief, sighing a great many times and saying in a half undertone, " Ah, it was not so at belle Sainte Anne's ! "

In the white dawn good Father Damien went away to the south. The little town slept, but ma tante watched the prairie ship go out over the snowy trail, watched and while she wept, prayed. Ah, Pere Damien ! Those who knew you best, loved you most ; gentle, kind, humble little saint, this pen trembles and these eyes grow dim writing the sad solemn words—good-bye. The good-byes we said, knowing not it would be for-

ever. Sleep faithful heart, sleep well. Above your prairie bed our tears will often fall—fall for a good father and a faithful friend.

And Gracie, quietly sadly dreaming her own waking dreams, listened to the sobs of ma tante in the solemn watches of the night, and wondered why sorrow should ever come to human hearts—wonder and weep until sleep, the blotter-out of all sad things, fell, bringing reposeful strength that grew with the days, nerving her stout little lonely heart, that had almost grown faint at the call—the first call to arm for the battle for bread.

Ten days had gone by and on Saturday morning the little town was covered by snow; snow that came with a biting north wind, that thickened and beat down with a fury and grandeur seen only on the plains. Snow everywhere. The wind went down about six o'clock, or as the natives say "with the sun," and when the Sabbath day dawned and the frown of the storm had passed away, the sun resplendant shone down, making a dazzling picture. As far as eye could reach to the south, white sheen in a lustrous, brightness; flooding the world in a humid scintillating glow that blinded while it enchanted the eye.

Ma tante, shading her sight under the canopy of a withered hand, stood at the window and watched the line of prairie trail anxiously. The sun was making a gem-casket of that waste of white. Gracie, rested in a big chintz-covered chair after a cozy breakfast, while Lizette was singing down stairs in a piercing key, some sacred refrain. The baby, in an improvised cradle, swung easily and slept. Suddenly an exclamation "mon neveu!" from Ma tante, woke Gracie, and the cradle stirred uneasily. Ma tante's seamed face was lighted with a great joy as she turned from the window:—

"Vient d'arriver, je vais sonner la cloche a' fin que les gens viennent a' la sainte messe! Her hands clasped and unclasped nervously, "Je puis disoigner la voiture couverte! Le bon Dieu est bon! Il vient!"

Gracie's heart filled with a great longing as she saw Ma tante pass swiftly down the stairs; ah, Ma tante might cry, "he comes?" but baby mine, baby mine, no one will ever come to us—will ever come to us again! *We are alone!* And the young mother bending over the sleeping child sobbed, and in the desolation of her young life she cried aloud, "God is unjust! We are alone!" Just then the church bell in the steeple above *St. Mary of the Snows* rang out. It was Ma tante's withered hands ringing out the message. Over the expanse of white moved some-

thing slowly. The white-hooded sleigh coming along the trail, nearer, nearer ; ki-ling-i-ling-i-ling-a-lang ! the bells called, and above all in songful gusts rose Lizette's note :—

“ Le crêpe de la nuit sur l'univers se pose,
La nature se tait : tout dort se repose,
Hors Dieu dans son immensité.”

“ Hâtez vous, Lizette ! hâtez vous ! faite le feu ; apportez les bas chands ! mais nourriture pas encore ; Le sainte messe d'abord ! ” Ma tante's voice in joyful charge at the moment that the rebellious cry from Gracie's own heart went out. The next instant hoarse weeping filled the house ; despairing shrieks ; Lizette's shrill cry ; heavy steps and slow, and there as Gracie looked down the stairway, through the open door came men bearing a burden—a still form, its trailing robe, a worn soutane catching beneath their feet, as they walked ; the arms hanging, and the face—the dear kind face set with the seal of death. Dear good father Damien dead.

God was surely unjust !

The little missionary who went out ten short days before at the Master's bidding, “ Go ye into all nations.” He went. He would never come again. The long journey—a frame unfitted for missionary life. He had started before dawn that Sabbath morning, to be in time for the morning mass—fasting. The snow-fall covered the trail ; blinded by the glare, bewildered in that trackless waste of white he guided his little pony ; round and round he went, walking in a circle. Almost in sight of home he fell, by the trail. He had fallen like the soldier he was—fallen in the service of his Captain. They found him lying there, still warm, within sight of home, within sound of the church bells ; and perchance the last sound that broke on his ear in earth, was Ma tante's call. Surely the echo joined in joyful exultation as the bells of heaven broke on his sinless soul.

CHAPTER XI.

Leaving Shaganappy Rancho in agitated haste, the honorable Dill-raven-Toft, his dark face clouded by some look of terror or hate, lashed his pony with whip-stock and urged the steady-going little animal by jabbing spur. The night fell dark and gloomy; the dull sky was lit up by momentary flash, signals of fire, a telegraphic code from camp to camp indicating some added horror. To the south, a lurid shaft of red light shot upwards, beyond that, other vengeful flames appeared. To the west a broad glare showing the devilish work was going on. Dark bare-branched timbers standing out against the lurid light were like arms upreached, as if in mute appeal to the Almighty to stay that onsweeping tide of desolation. Settlers' homes burning all around, still he did not hesitate nor cast one backward glance, but on, on, on. Twelve miles of the distance was passed. There was the big coulee to the left. His thoughts took life and he was speaking in excited under-breaths: Why had he ever returned to the accursed country? Had he but remained another day in London—had he but lingered on a little longer at Dalton-by—he would have known. To rush back into the danger! What *was* the danger? Did it shadow him now? Was it lurking there in the hollows or waiting for him on the hill beyond? He would sift this now; then he would go back to London. All doors would open to him now. Armed with this magnificent creature his wife, he would ride upon the top wave of ambition's sea—What would silence *that other one*? The bend in the river at last! Eighteen miles of the way done, and now in the distance Horrock's shack shows dimly. Dawn like some shy maiden aglow with happiness and joy, from sylphid draperies peeps out across the undulating waste of whited green. With a last brave effort the native pony dashes up to the door of the prairie shack; the rider swung himself off, loosening girth and bridle, then he hurriedly entered the rough-board door and passed within. He rapped with the stock of his whip along the wall and floor, calling aloud, first in a commanding way, then in angry shouts. But the broken echoes were his answer. The ashes in the grate were yet warm. Some one had lately been there—he would

wait. He threw himself upon a bunk which stood against the wall, and congested thought overcame his heated brain. He slept.

He awoke with a shock to find the sun high in the heavens. He shivered but he was not cold. Knowing the ways of his friends' house, he built a fire and made some coffee. The pony wandered about at some distance and was nibbling the parched grass. Mr. Toft drank the hot coffee, and from the open door scanned the prairie with anxious eyes. He waited for some hours longer, restlessly going out and in, alternately watching the trail and sitting thoughtfully with bent head by the small deal table on which his fingers nervously beat a devil's tattoo. A two-fold trouble filled his mind. "Horrocks, d— him! why did he not say where——. The precious pair! What if it came to Barbara's ears? As for that—*there was always one way out of it—he was master!*"

The sun had begun to dip now, and it shone round, red and radiant through the small-paned window. Still he waited. Evening was coming down in darkling waves, shrouding the trails and shadowing the little hillocks spreading and extending from view. With a piece of burnt ember he scrawled upon the table this message:—

"Have been here since last night. Let me know immediately *where the danger lies.*" This he did not sign, then throwing down the burnt coal with an oath, left the shanty, mounted his horse and began the long ride back to Shaganappy Rancho. All the miles dashing along he did not look up once, never halted, never lessened speed, and before he was aware of it he was entering the lane leading to his home, his attention being called to this by waves of thick heavy sickening smoke that hung in billows beyond and was borne above the poplar grove between. The pony was picking up his ears with instinctive alarm, then he snorted and trembled, tossing his head with fear. The thick smoke now choked man and beast and clogged the air. He urged his horse on.

Great God! what devilish transformation was this? Ruin! ruin everywhere! Shaganappy Rancho gone! No movement, no life save a little fluttering bird that hopped about among the warm ashes, the only thing amid that maze of destruction and confusion that breathed of life before his maddened sight.

Dilraven Toft fell, rather than dismounted from his horse, and the little animal freed from his burden trotted to where, yesterday, a well-filled corn-crib stood. He whinnied his disappointment and with a toss

of the mane turned again to his master, as if craving sympathy, rubbing his nose against that master's arm. He struck the dumb creature across the face, and the poor little brute blinded by the blow, cantered back to the spot where its shelter had been, surveying with almost human madness the marks of ruin. Dilraven Toft standing upon the ashes of the threshold of his home, hate darting from his wild eyes, maledictions upon his tongue, and fear, torturing *fear* within his trembling soul, shouted as a maniac might: "She has done this! Curse her, *she has done this!*" Blinded by smoke and rage and the night shadows he stepped on, and stumbled over a human form lying there. He trembled and dare not look. When the first fear had passed, he stooped and saw it was the face, the dead face of his friend Captain Olds. With half-averted look he moved about, continuing the search for what he feared to see; still no trace, stay!—Here a half burnt slipper and a torn bit of plaid-lined mantle—"O God! O God, be merciful to me!" he cried "Am I left alone—*alone to remember!*"

Amid the wreckage of that mockery of home, crouching and muttering like one demented, sat the honorable Dilraven Toft; at a little distance, looking on and shivering was the pony; both desolate, the one distraught.

It seemed to be some horrid dream he had awakened from, to find eager friendly faces about him, and was it his disordered fancy conjured up that face—*her accusing face*—was that the face of his wife, before him? Out of the chaos of thought the familiar eyes, stern and unrelenting changed while he looked—a helmeted head that moved nearer and said, with a shout it seemed:—

"Scoundrel! Where is my sister?"

"Gone, gone!" was all he could utter, and look up in bewildered appeal to that stern countenance.

Reverential hands lifted up the charred form of the gallant old soldier. Upon the prairie they made a couch of tender willow branches, parched thatch his pillow, and about his form a red serge, an offering from a Canadian boy and fit shroud for a soldier. No martial music sadly intoned; no rank and file in funeral parade; no solemn requiem. A little hollow scooped from the prairie's low bed; bowed heads bared in reverential prayer; a tender reaching out of brother-soldier hands; dull throbblings of the heavy clay, a single volley fired, then "Forward!"

That lonely burial scene by Saskatchewan's banks, with the starry eyes of heaven upon it, had more of grandeur in its sublime simplicity, than any pageantry that ever marched with martial honors beneath the royal dome of Westminster Abbey.

The flight of the Indians showed plainly upon the ground, and the trail leading east was closely followed. Townley Haddam had spoken but once to the wretched man, who had been placed upon a saddle, and now had to be assisted along. At the moment of starting he leaned over to whisper :—

"Toft, it is mercy between us now—*justice afterwards!*"

They rode four abreast, the two scouts ahead, who kept a keen eye upon the trail, watching the broad sweep of level prairie for smoke wreaths. After some hours hard riding they came upon a heap of ashes, cold—but, to the cunning *Riders of the Plains*, lately burned. There the mark of a small shoe showed plainly, a woman's shoe. They were on the right track now. Towards night the tell-tale camp smoke rose up ahead—a hurried consultation was held; calculating eyes measured the distance, then orders were given :—

"Ride forward, and when within view of the camp separate, quietly advance, surround them, and, without firing a shot, make prisoners of all—a lady and a young man are prisoners—their safety at all hazards."

They rode on silent, watchful. All at once a whispered word was given as the advancing scouts suddenly drew rein and dropped from their horses. A short parley was held, and then the men separated. Before the surprised savages—glutted by feasting and befogged by the liquor—plunder fatal to their cruel cause—could reach blood-stained hands for blood-hungry weapons, a ringing shout goes up, "*Surrender!*" And above the savage yells of rage, above the din, a woman's shriek rings out: "*Townley, my brother!*"

Confronting each other, eye to eye, husband and wife stood for one awful moment.

"Barbara, my wife!" The woman's hands went up in mute denial, then her outreaching arms to the brother, were clasped in the despairing strength of her disconsolate and broken life, and in that protection she knew she was safe.

"Don't come near my sister!" said Townley, "until this is explained, Toft. Barbara, how comes it that you were taken prisoner, and alone?"

"O, God ! I am a lost woman !" she moaned. "Brother, I am not his wife—his true wife is—already—in his—home."

"A lie ! A damned lie !" shouted Toft, regarding not the wondering looks from the men, now free to make observations, as the ground was cleared, and the swarthy prisoners were tamely awaiting the next move. "This is some infernal plot to injure me ! A paltry miserable plot" —————

"You are a *thief*, I already know," broke in Townley, "and a liar, I suppose, as well. Explain what you mean, Barbara. Speak without fear, I am here to protect you."

At a whispered word from Townley to his commanding officer, the men were ordered to march with their prisoners some little distance away. Then, with hysterical sobs and tears, Barbara moaned out the story of her home-going ; of Toft's hurried departure. Townley clenched his hands, as if ready to strike down the creature standing there quaking in limb, baleful light shooting from his inflamed eyes, and only when she told of the mysterious letter left on the table, did he answer :—

"A lie !" A paltry infernal lie !"

"It speaks its own story," said Barbara, taking from her bosom a folded paper. Townley stooped, and, by the light from the camp fire, read :—

"Scoundrel !—You have dishonored dishonor. You bring a woman here, while I, your wronged wife, dare not speak. Thirteen years have I been daily in sight of your treacherous face—with you while you waked—standing over you while you slept, often with my fingers *almost* closing upon your white throat, wanting nothing but *the will* to crush your false life out. The God that follows human scorpions as you are—the avenging God—stayed my hand. He will punish ! Upon the Shallows you deserted me—denied your child. Horrocks, your guilty partner, can prove this. I abandoned your child, as you abandoned me,—I leave this cursed roof to-night to find my child. My life has been a long Gethsemane.—ISOBEL."

Townley looked up to see Dilraven Toft calmly, amusedly smiling.

"So, so," he said, with a sardonic laugh, "She did it well, very well. She was always clever, always ; clever little Nance !" and his smile was unhealthy.

"Can you explain this, you scoundrel ?" asked Townley determinedly. ~

"Explain ? Oh, yes, quite easily ; Mrs. Toft,"—turning to Barbara who looked as if she must fall but for her brother's supporting arm—

"will pardon me, if, in doing so, I shock her puritan ears by relating a few unwholesome—facts." The word came with a savage snap. "Sit down, Barbara," he said seating himself easily. "It's a rather long story," he went on with an insolent gaze in the faces of the two, still standing before him. "When I was younger than I am now—and I'll allow, not so sedate in my habits, I had a few of the fads, follies if you will, common to gentlemen in my position. There was a silly little dancer in a concert hall—Isobel Trent—Isobel liked flattery—and pearls; I sometimes humored those fancies—by and by the Trent got rather frequent in her demands. My people—not exactly in the dancing line, you understand—objected to the whole affair. We arbitrated the matter—my people gave me sufficient inducement to come to Canada, for my health you understand—dancing didn't agree with the family!" Again the mocking smile. "She wouldn't arbitrate, so to satisfy her scruples I allowed a friend of my own, a clever fellow, to pose as—clergyman—and, well, part of the performance was that we both promised all sorts of things—I left London and left a letter for the dancer saying it was all a lark. By gad, sir! the first day out she was face to face with me on the ship! The face changed as he went on, "You know the rest. The wreck upon the Shallows! By some damnable fatality we were both saved—why should I embarrass myself with a dying woman—a woman who was nothing to me? I thought, of course, she'd do the proper thing—die—she didn't it seems." The speaker's eyes shut in a dangerous slit-fashioned way. He laughed aloud as if amused by some inner thought and repeated, "Clever little Nance!"

"And I?" gasped Barbara, with hands pressed above her throbbing heart, leaning forward, her eyes wild, her lips drawn, the whole attitude one of despairing fear that the man sitting there and smiling with so devilish a smile, still was her owner, her master.

"You are Lady Toft!" rising to his feet and bowing profoundly, "I should perhaps have told you, that among the letters handed me that evening was one written twenty-four hours after I left London, informing me of my father's death, which, as you are aware, makes you my lady Toft." In spite of his effort to withhold the satisfaction he felt, by that velvet-like smile, the repellant blandness did not cover his inward delight at what he considered a *coup de grâce*, and Barbara shrank back seeing that smile. She looked up at Townley with an appealing glance.

"You are his wife—God help you!" Townley said.

"Do not leave me!" she pleaded, clinging to his arm, and fixing on her husband, who was advancing, a look of mingled contempt and fear.

"Well, madam! as you are my wife it is quite probable he *will* leave you—Come, Lady Toft, your place is here," extending an arm with insolent mock courtesy; "here is your proper protection."

"No!" she said, looking straight into his eyes, "I will never accept your protection—I will never live with you."

"You are a thief!" said Townley moving a step, so as to come between the two. "You robbed me at Inch Arran that morning, when I, fool that I was, tried to copy your excesses and trusted in your snake smile. The Jaw, Dilraven Toft, gives you the brutal right to force this woman to your side, but there is a higher law you yet must be judged by—look to it that you give to my sister that faith which is now her due—no, I'll not take your hand, you cur of a race of curs!"

"Oh, come now! no use in relations getting crusty—that little matter of the money packet"—Mr. Toft laughed quite a musical laugh, but his teeth showed—"that was merely a *contre-temps*: you see, my people were getting a little crusty—found it rather expensive to furnish a fatted calf annually—I was regular in 'going unto my father' you know,"—again the teeth showed white, but there was no laugh. "When you borrowed my coat I hadn't thought of charging you for the accommodation, I assure you—but *you forgot to empty the pockets* and"—

"But the woman—the woman—who wrote that letter?" said Barbara doubtingly.

"Oh, don't let that disturb you at all Lady Toft" he said in an assuring way. "I told her coming over—in the ship you know—that Horrocks was only masquerading as a reverend—I wonder she didn't knife him!" he said in a reflective tone. "Gad! to think little Nance was—clever Nance! handy-fingered Nance! God! how I've been fooled!"

"Don't touch me!" his wife's arms barred his approach and her look terrified him. "I hate you," she said, "and I'll never live with you!" The sound of approaching voices; a measured tread—they turned half in alarm—up rode a body of mounted men, a sea of familiar faces led by one whose eyes met Barbara's eyes and sent the crimson torrent from the rapids of her wounded heart, and dyed her pale cheeks with shame. *She must not let him see her shame!* A step and she was by her husband's side, her hand reaching out blindly, despairingly, as she said: "Take me—home."

Tom, blundering out his delight at this lucky meeting, hearing the details of the imprisonment, and seeing the Indians bound, and captive in turn, stupidly mistook the expression on the tragedy-haunted faces, and in honest sympathy extended his hand to the man who had robbed him, choking the tears back as he held the hand of his old-time love, and tried to speak but could not do so, while the Earl of Steppes smiled a meaning smile.

Hurried preparations for the move on were made. Barbara, like some ill-starred queen going to death, rode silent, sad, submissive. Townley, his heart a molten mass of remorse, understanding his sister's sudden change; Tom trying to be natural, and failing terribly while he tried; and the new earl—a hero in his own eyes, master of the situation—one fear only in his mind—Nancy! Tom telling of the fugitive lad, struck the key note to that fear.

"Let us go to the lad" said the noble earl, "I think I know him—well."

Barbara had not spoken to her brother since that last appeal, but he understood the old pride that bore her resolution up—it was the presence of the man she had wronged—and for what? Alas! for a splendour already tarnished by bitter but unavailing tears.

Towards them a young lad was advancing over the prairie. He saluted Captain Tom as he came up, and Barbara noted the start, and the chalky-pallor on one face there. There was a familiar something in the turn of Jerry's head with its brown shock of curls, and something seemed to give way in Barbara's brain with a clap that deafened sound. Jerry was the deserted waif that poor Denovy sheltered in his own hard poverty—and Jerry was his child—*his child!* In a dazed way she felt herself moving on with the party, in a dazed way she found they had stopped, and noted with returning conscious pain, that upon the prairie grass some dark thing, and motionless, lay there. She dismounted and followed to where some one had drawn down the coarse blanket covering a still form outlined there, and Barbara saw a brown boyish face crowned with clustering curls, and she heard some one say:—

"No, sir! never let on he was hurt at all—just lay there quiet, holding Jerry's hands and he went to sleep just so, and in the morning we found him—her" corrected the speaker, "dead."

The Earl of Toft turned away with something in his heart that was not exultation as he expected it should be. He looked at Jerry, now

gouging his eyes out, and stifling the tears that would come, and then the honorable Mr. Toft turned away.

People can turn away from everything in the world but their own thoughts, can part with everything but memory.

Barbara stooped down and tenderly put back the brown curls, crossed the slight arms in restful repose, and drawing from her finger a broad bright band, she drew it upon a still, slender brown finger, and turning to Jerry, who was now crying, she said in a sacred way: "Come here Jerry. Let us—you and me—kiss the poor dead one for those who cannot."

To-day—ten years after—you may not find even a trace of that lonely grave upon the western prairies, but a woman's tears must have hallowed that spot, and the all-merciful Eye surely grew misty with a divine pity, at that humble tribute.

CHAPTER XII.

"Great heavens!"

This pious wail came from Mrs. Bloomsbury, who was seated at the breakfast table, her staring eyes fixed upon the open page of a letter held in one hand, while the fat fingers of the other held midway betwixt the table and her lips, her coffee cup, its contents cooling rapidly, while her dilated eyes seemed to grow rounder and bigger as she read. At last she let the page fall, still within her grasp, but lying upon a trembling limb. She gave a tremendous sigh, looking straight at her husband who, surely felt that gaze, for he suddenly looked up from the newspaper he held before him, saying:—

"I see the X, Y and Z company are determined to have another try for the right-of-way—eh? My dear. What is the matter?" This anxiously, and pausing in the natural movement of biting into an appetizing muffin.

Mrs. Bloomsbury had put down her cup which she now moved some little distance further away, and she put back her cap strings as if they interfered with her breathing. The terrible expression of her eyes had melted into a horrified vacant gaze, and raising the written page to the level of the table, she placed a finger thereon in solemn silence.

"It's like this, you see," began her husband, hastily swallowing the liquid contents of his cup, "If the X, Y and Z should agree"—

"Do you know, Perritt, what this says?" Mrs. Bloomsbury's voice gasped the words, making a motion of the head towards the gentleman opposite, and again lifting the letter as she repeated "what this letter says?"

"Letter?" repeated Mr. Bloomsbury, "Dear me! I quite forgot," dropping paper and muffin, and fumbling among his many pockets in a disturbed way, "why, yes, I've a letter from Townley here somewhere—ah! here it is—yes ma—now, what does Gracie say?"

Mr. Bloomsbury, after buttering a muffin with great deliberation, and taking a generous scallop out of the same, inserted his paper knife beneath the flap of the envelope he had brought to view, and proceeded

to give his attention equally to both. His wife had become engrossed in further pages, and a tightening of the lips boded some new emotion bursting into unexpressed thought and eddying rapidly upon the surface of her mind.

"H'm, hum!" her husband muttered with something like a frown; "money? I suppose the young dog expects me to—m—m—m" The old gentleman laid the letter upon the table, blinked once or twice thoughtfully, as if weighing some decision; then made an attack upon the heap of browned cakes, and became suddenly conscious that his wife was winking back some imaginary tears, dabbing her nose in her pocket handkerchief, and giving evidence of serious mental disquiet in tearless sobs.

"Oh!" she gurgled, dabbing linen folds into each dry eye; "just think of it! all alone—the prairies—nobody there—fighting and—great heavens! they've called him Da—aa—mian!" Mrs. Bloomsbury almost shrieked the last word, as her excited eye, still upon the page and round the corner of her crumpled cambric, took in the full horror of the written lines. She fell back in her chair, gasped twice—the letter fell to the carpet, and down went Mrs. Bloomsbury's head in its lace cap, upon two plump arms across the breakfast table.

Mr. Bloomsbury took the shortest way towards determining the reason for this new outbreak. He leaned over, reached down, and picked up the letter his wife had let fall.

"Dear me! dear me!" he said, taking in the meaning with the first lines thereon penned. "God bless me! all alone too!—in the fight—thought he was—dead! God bless me!! St. Anne's! *What? Eh?*"

This seemed to rouse Mrs. Bloomsbury, who at once sat up very straight and very rigid; her countenance expressing great resignation, if not fierce resolve.

"Yes, Perritt; *all alone!* It was a—a judgment—a judgment on her for her slyness and—deceit. To be there two years after—a beggar, almost a beggar at his door—It was a judgment on him too. Catch him not knowing they were a runaway pair!" The lady, bending over while she spoke, reached dexterously across the damask and rescued the letter from her husband's limp hands. "And now, now," she said with mingled bitterness and wrath, "to call a christian child by that *awful* name! Da—aa—mi—an!"

"God bless my soul!" blurted out her husband, blowing his nose violently to cover the unexpected arrival of two determined tears in his anxious eyes, "What the dev—ickens does it matter what they call the child so long as she is well! Dear me! dear me! she's a trump, that's what she is; and I'll"—The old gentleman rose from his seat, he began an agitated walk up and down the breakfast-room and found himself fumbling his pockets as he used to do long years before, for stray six-penny bits—ah! that was long, long ago, and now"—He withdrew his hands, rubbing the fingers nervously together, while a medley of broken sentences tripped upon his tongue, out of which came such words as: "draft—bank—cheque—at sight"; not observing at all that Mrs. Bloomsbury, having turned another page, was now gazing up at him, joy radiating from her beaming countenance, the whole features transformed, the facial landscape serene. "He's a strong, sturdy chap, she says, eh ma?" Mr. Bloomsbury turned to say.

"He's made a captain!" that lady burst out, nodding and smiling until her cap-strings quivered with reflective delight.

"Eh? What? Who's made a captain?" questioned the startled old gentleman facing squarely about, "you don't mean a new-born baby, I—hope?"

"I always knew he was a scoundrel!" ejaculated Mrs. Bloomsbury, her forefinger fixed upon a line, her eye, earnestly prophetic turned upon her husband, while she added in a bass key, "Oh, the sneak! Perritt, we could put him in the penitentiary!"

"Well, my love," said Mr. Bloomsbury seating himself, and turning mild remonstrative eyes upon his wife, "If you will explain to me whether it is Gracie's baby that has been made a—captain, or—that we are to put in the peni"—

Mrs. Bloomsbury having turned the page cross-wise had discovered new cause for surprise it would appear, for she burst into a shrill discordant laugh, while her husband shivered, so mirthless, so waspish it sounded.

"Ha! ha! ha! ha! So he's got a title! Going home to—London! He'll have the family jewels! Two months married, and now *they don't speak!* Ha! Ha! Ha!"

This was really alarming. Mr. Bloomsbury began to have vague fears; his mind was in a perturbed whirl; in agitated wonder he pon-

dered the possibility of being made grandfather to a new-born captain of something indefinite, who bore a character of unintelligible guilt; who was liable to criminal conviction, while enchained in a hazy sort of way in family jewels? Moreover, having a wife, could he be accused of the crime of not speaking to her, when, according to natural law ~~she~~ *she* should not as yet speak at all? While these bewildered thoughts haunted Mr. Bloomsbury's mind, he observed with some satisfaction that his wife's face was once more wreathed in smiles. She had arrived at the post-script, and it was the same important addenda penned some pleasant argument—she sank back once more, saying:—

"So, Mr. Bloomsbury! my lady Toft is married to a——*thief!*" *He* stole the express package—*He* hurried Townley away by saying he was liable to be arrested—*He's* come in for his father's title—and money, and *his own wife won't speak to him!*"

Out of this fragmentary vociferation of feminine feeling, Perritt Bloomsbury gained this idea: that if he wished to disentangle the facts, somehow involved in his family affairs, he had better read his own letter, which being from Townley himself, would undoubtedly make matters clear. The letter ran:—

"REGINA, N.W.T.,

June —, 1885.

"My dear Sir,—As my dear Gracie is writing to her mother by this mail, and will give all the interesting family news, I will confine myself to a matter which has already cost both you and myself much trouble of mind. I refer to the missing money package. Herewith is enclosed a check for the full amount, *signed by the person who appropriated the money.* The loss of the package was, indirectly, my fault, but, thank God, only so far as guilty companionship, and the follies attendant, go.

"When I left Daltonby, I was under the impression that I was indeed, a thief!—I could not prove my innocence—I could not understand my guilt—my dear wife believed in me—I determined to begin anew, to repay the money, to win back your confidence, and, upon the broken foundation of the early mis-spent years, re-build and begin a new life.

"When I reached the Northwest, the rebellion had broken out. I volunteered my services and joined the Mounted Police, and went to the front. I believed my wife to be safe at home with you. In the first action, when we were surprised by a band of black scoundrels, and amid

a shower of bullets, with almost certain death on all sides, my one thought was, "Am I branded to die as a thief?" And in that hour the fevered panorama of my past life rose up, as it is said to do to the dying, and I remembered. The night you instructed me to forward the package to Faraday, Faraday & Co. I spent at Inch Arran with Toft and the fellows. At dawn I left the rooms, befogged in brain, and the morning being raw, I went to Toft's room and borrowed a coat from him. I went up to the office with the full intention of sending the package. While there my father came. I slipped the money in a pocket. Some words passed between us relative to my late hours. Heated by the wine I had taken, and, fearing further questioning as to whether I had carried out the orders given the day before, I hurried out. I went back direct to Toft's room, where I lay down and fell asleep; when I awoke I forgot about the packet. I left the coat in Toft's room, returned to the office, and from the hour in which I first took the money package, addressed to Faraday, Faraday & Co., until that day in the fight at Fish Creek, when, in what I thought was my last hour, I never could tell what I did with the money. Then, I remembered! Need I tell you, sir, that I fought then for more than life—for honor.

"Toft is the Earl of Steppes now. He does not deny having taken the money, but gives his reasons for having made what he calls 'the appropriation,' with all his infernal impudence and aplomb. I dare say no more. He is my sister's husband. Barbara, poor girl, has passed through a terrible experience. A prisoner in Big Wolf's camp, the shock of seeing a companion shot down, and her home burned before her eyes has had a terrible effect on her—poor girl—I fear what lies ahead of her is worse.

"Gracie tells her mother of the providential meeting with good Father Damien, the priest who married us at dear old St. Anne's. He was so good to my dear one.

"The enclosed cheque closes the last of that unhappy memory. Need I say to you, dear sir, that the lesson which has cost me so much is not lost? Gracie, my good angel, says I need not. She also desires me to say that our boy looks like grandpa, but to my dull eyes the resemblance does not seem too striking! Toft and his wife left for England yesterday and they will"——

But Mrs. Bloomsbury waited to hear no more; she was away in a flutter of flounces, and a moment later was heard shrilly ordering Katey

the maid to "prepare the pink room *at once*, put on the silk pillow shams and fill the vases with roses; my dear neice, the Lady Dillraven Toft will be here!" But the Earl of Steppes did not stop at Daltonby. He went his aristocratic way, his mind pondering many things. His wife, Lady Toft, continued to be cold, calm, indifferent; silent, save when necessity made her give a monosyllabic answer, rousing her for the moment from the depth of an apparent despair. These two went their divided lives together, bound by an indissoluble tie, yet wider apart than the boundless ocean that was bearing them to the land where awaited her the splendour and the wealth for which she had bartered all.

Tom Windsor brought back to Daltonby, above the Shallows, the "Shamrock Leaf" boys. Two had fallen on the western plains; their names? Recorded in a greater book than any made by hands, they stand, none braver therein written. Jerry, too, was missing, but not as one who gives his life for his country. Jerry had, by the most mysterious means imaginable, become sole owner of one of the biggest ranches in the Territories. The honorable Dillraven Toft, tired of 'roughing it,' and having come in for tremendous estates, and withal a title to frame all this, disposed of his Lone Land interests. Jerry, all his life accustomed to obedience, and taking upon his small bent shoulders the grave responsibilities of life, in the same grave way accepted this good luck; being assured by Captain Tom (who drew up the papers indeed, and saw them duly signed in the presence of Barbara), that 'his brothers and sisters,' as he called them, would follow him to the beautiful prairie land. So Jerry said good-bye to Captain Tom, and through tears, watched the brave boys marching away. He turned to a little mound, fresh made, and without knowing why, wept out upon it the loneliness and weariness of his own heart. They were both alone in the Sunset Land—two strangers, oddly met and left there, lonely.

Mrs. Bloomsbury was now intensely interested in the North-West. "My son, Captain Haddam!" being a favorite topic. Barrack-life on the great Plains filled every crevice in conversation in all her social visits, and she assured her hearers "the life of an officer's lady was really fatiguing;" fearing at times, almost with tears that "my dear Gracie would succumb to the social strain!" But Mrs. Bloomsbury's imagination found other fields to explore. Von Krissman and his bride on the banks of the Rhine, sent out appeals for funds even from Count Yollop's tower amid "castled crags." It was in this case however, pa Bloomsbury

who "frowued o'er the wide and winding Rhine;" Carrie at last declared that unless papa gave her an allowance, she would be reduced to the awful necessity of *doing something*! This was vague and alarming, but Mrs. Bloomsbury advanced the suggestion that Count Yollop should contribute to the necessities of the case, with sundry unpleasant written remarks, causing consternation in "castled crags". The appeals ceased suddenly, with the letters—Had Count Yollop materialized handsomely, or—awful thought, was Carrie *doing something*?

One satisfaction: Madame de Hebert sailed once a year into Dalton-by harbour. Elegancia with her pretty foreign looking babes was rowed ashore, a dark skinned *bonne* lending a touch of grandeur to the arrival, and Mrs. Bloomsbury had an opportunity of airing her knowledge of French, by screaming in shrill falsetto:—"Bong Djew! 'ow she haf grow! Mong pateet, bong Djew!"

Tom Windsor plodded along in his profession. He sometimes dreamed still, but never let the dreams come out of the twilight of thought. He had become the possessor of Cozydean, and there with his mother, Tom lived quietly. Sometimes the shadows in the corners took queer shapes, and as the years went on there was a little stoop noticeable in Tom's broad shoulders, but that was quite becoming in a middle aged man whose shoulders wore the Judge's ermine.

London is ever in sight of some eye, and is it any wonder that in far off Daltonby the movements of great men in that great centre should be watched with interest? The Earl of Steppes sits in the House of Lords now, but Lady Toft—one of the few reigning beauties (whose portrait does *not* hang in art windows) is seldom heard of. She could be the rage in London life if she chose; but it is whispered her only child is a pronounced invalid and Lady Toft is devoted to him. Too, her health has failed, and eminent specialists have been consulted about some malady—of the eye it is thought—but the restless London world goes on, and the Earl of Steppes is the central figure. On him all eyes are turned.

A bill dealing with the colonies is before the House of Lords. The Earl of Steppes has been in the Colonies. He understands the question thoroughly. The Earl of Steppes is to attack the important points of the bill—all Canada—all England listens!

The great London dailies come out next morning. The cable flashes the news across—Canada reads—Daltonby shudders:—

'The Earl of Steppes, who was to have spoken on the great Colonial bill last night in the House of Lords, suicided about an hour before the opening of the Chamber. Temporary insanity, thought to be induced by family afflictions, the cause—his only son being a hopeless cripple and his young wife blind.'

"Mother!" said Judge Windsor, looking up from the paper that shook in his hand, "I leave for London to-night. Will you go with me—to Barbara?"

"My dear," said the gentle voiced but faded little lady, looking up, "whenever you wish."

An apartment of sumptuous magnificence, splendour in rich tapestry hangings, costly furniture in old and rare designs, a surfeit of beauty in general, and, amid this cloying ostentation of wealth, a lonely figure, bowed and helpless, sits.

"May I get down and walk to-day, mamma?" The dim light of sunset fell in roseate hues through the stained glass windows upon the puny form of a child seated in a small wheel-chair. Small hands, that show no healthy growth, are reaching out, and the misshapen little body rocks and sways in a rage terrible to see, trying to break away the silken bonds. "My wants to get down and run about, mamma. *Why* may my not run like uzzer little boys?" Querulous cries and angry beating of small stunted limbs, until, in answer to a summons, a servant in livery enters.

"Your Ladyship rang?"

"Ah, is it you, Baldwin? Yes, take your master out in the grounds.

"My won't go! my *won't* go! my *hates* a grounds! my hates Baldwin! my wants to walk like uzzer little boys!"—and the poor deformed child throws its shrunken little body against the velvet cushions of its prison chair, weeping and swaying, piteously.

"Don't, don't, my darling! don't Haddam! Mamma will come, too, and we shall see the pretty trees."

"My is the Earl of Steppes, mamma, and my can't walk!" A bowed head fell over the shrunken limbs, and a white face pressed convulsively against the little body. While she knelt thus, a maid entered, bearing a salver, and, approaching, laid two cards within Lady Toft's hands, saying, respectfully:—

"Mr. Windsor and Mrs. Windsor, of Daltonby, my lady."

Baldwin was wheeling his young master across the room, and the maid passed out with them. In the middle of the apartment stood Barbara, Lady Toft, waiting. Over her face some emotion played, flickered and went out. He had come ——— at last! What did they say? The fingers touched the cards, as the fingers of the blind do—"Mr. and Mrs. Windsor—ah, yes, of course, Tom was a Judge now, and he was in London—with his wife!" The fingers shook until the bits of pasteboard fluttered out of her grasp. Some one was coming—would she fall when she met him? Could she live if their hands met as————— strangers? She put out a groping hand to feel for a chair. It was taken in a warm grasp that would never let go, she thought, and she heard one word only—"Barbara!"

"Is————, your wife—in the room?" Her eyes looked out, but as the eyes of one who sees not. Tom did not answer—he was crying, though she could not see the tears, and, as if answering her own question, she repeated softly, "She has not come."

"It is my mother who is with me," said Tom, and, full to the heart of the anguish of seeing his old love, with that sad face crowned by snow-touched hair, he sobbed his anguish out, as a child might. Beside her chair Tom knelt, and on the tide of the old-time love came the old, sweet story and he told her that he loved her still.

She shook her head sadly, barred him by thin hands, locked together and sighed.

"Too late!—too late!" she said. "You have all your youth—you are young yet, Tom, and I"—she paused a moment, and turned the beautiful sightless eyes upon him, while the delicately curved lip trembled—"darkness my portion, but, Tom," the hands went up with something like a prayerful appeal, "I shall always have with me, the light of other-days!"

Rough Ben.

AN INCIDENT OF THE NORTH-WEST REBELLION.

(Reproduced from "Songs of the Great Dominion," by kind permission of Mr. W. D. Lighthall.)

"Starved t' death! Sounds kinder hard, eh?
But it's true as gospil; as good a wife
As was ever dumped in a prairie grave
Was jest *starved t' death*, sir, 'pon me life!
Ye won'er how in a land ov plenty
Where even Injins wallop 'round
'Ith ther' belts a-loosened ov overfeedin'
Fer a poor white settler grub ain't found?
Well, y' see there's starvin' deeper'n eatin'
An' the woman I'm tellin' ye 'bout t'day,
Ain't died ov lack ov bannock an' bacon
No! but a darn'd sight crueller way.
I'll jest drop the lines acrost th' furrow,
Fer I ain't a-goin' t' plough nor sow,
See them there oxen, g'long there ye' beggars;
(Th' flies is eatin' ther' heads off), who-o-a l'
Well, as I was sayin', years ago, r' no matter
When this here place wasn't much to see
Me an' Bill Martin—that's his shack yander—
Cum an' squatted jest wher' we be.
Bimebye down-east folks a-hearin'
Land in the great Nor'West was free
Cum pourin' in like spring-tide water,
An' sir! from over the big salt sea
An' English chap that came tomfoolin'

A feller as never had no right
 T' 'speriment with a Nor' West winter—
 Th' fool fetched his sister an' took up a site.
 They pitched ther' tent —'twas a wagon cover—
 An' ther' they lived all summer thro',
 An' Bill an' me; sometimes of an' evenin'
 Helped t' knock up a shack fer them there two.
 They wasn't like settler folk 'n gen'ri;
 They kep' t' the'r selves, an' uster have books;
 So along October th' lad got aillin',
 Worrit an' fretted an' pinched in his looks.
 His cough got bad, an' I see his cattle—
 (Two durn fine head ov steer he'd bro't)
 I see th' gal a tryin' t' lead 'em,
 So I up an' offers t' mind the lot.
 She jest looked at me, never sayin' nothin'
 An' one little hand she laid in my own,
 Like a grasshopper's wing on a' acre ov fallow,
 An' her eyes! My God! they'd melt a stone.
 Chap pinched an' coughed an' nigher an' nigher
 What she cryin' called "De'th's Angil" come,
 An' off he went like a snuff ov' candle
 An' took up a Homestead beyoid the sun!
 Us fellers ploughed him in nex' mornin'
 'Thout much prayin' 'cept Bill, an' he
 Gev out an' cried like a gol durn baby
 A-hearin' the gal cry "cum back t' me!"
 Be Chris'mus the cattle died, blest if they didn't
 Contra'ry like, an' his land jest lay
 A-coaxin' ov weeds, an' the gal a-wiltin'
 "Th' Injuns is riz!" come the word one day.
 I found her sittin' an' kinder sobbin'
 Be the hill jest wher' we hed rolled him in,
 Lookin' peaked an' white, an' jest like a sperit
 A' ready its 'way t' th' angils t' win.
 All at onct I seed her trubble:
 'Twas want ov wimmin' t' cuddle her in!
 An' th' on'y petticoat here, was peradin'

A sort of promis'cus an' *lived b' sin*.
 An' sooner'n thet—I'd, well, I'd offer
 The best, an' all I hed sir ; me life !
 An' thet meant shelter, so th' Injuus comin'
 Jest frightened her inter a-bein' my wife.
 That makes ye stare ! well, I ain't t' say han'sum,
 But afore high God she was dear t' me !
 An' down th' trail she come t' my shanty
 Wher' I w'rshipped the groun' she walked. And she
 She *tried* t' smile, an' she called me Benny !
 An' the boys uste' laugh at ol' rough Ben ;
 But I cared fer her like she was a luck-penny
 An' the Injuns ? Oh, guv'ment soon settled 'em.
 Troops from below cum a-marchin' in Aperl ;
 An' Bill stood g'ard be night, me be day ;
 An' we stood off the divils 'ith shot an' powder
 Till the Mounted P'lece come in sight ; the gay
 Red coats took the Injuns' topknots
 An' peppered them divils 'ith shot an' sup'rise
 An' we opened the gates of the wood-pile Barracks
 An' what does I see 'ith me own two eyes—
 But thet little gal as I took under cover
 Grow red an' white, then fall like a star ;
 An' before I cud wink a eyelash, a sojer
 Shot like a arrow t' wher' she wer'
 "Uncle," says I, "r cousin mebbe,
 Thet went t' school wher' she le'rned them books,"
 But when he *kissed my gal*, I tumbled !
 An' shook like the leaves as shadder the brooks.
 An' then an' ther' come out the story—
 His folks parted 'em an' she come West ;
 An' the papers had sed *she died* ! D'ye follow,
 Or need I go on, sir, to' tell ye th' rest ?
 He follered t' Canady ; in Winnipeg waitin'
 He read the papers sayin' she hed died,
 So he jined th' P'leece t' furgit his trubbles,
 An' acrost the plains t' the front he'd ride
 Hopin' t' fall in a perarie holla'

An' rest whier' her spirit wandered near ;
 An' as I tell ye, when her eyes seed him,
 She dropped in her tracks *jest out of fear*.
 Thet evenin' I went off wanderin', hopin'
 Some Injin' 'ud fill me hide 'ith lead
 An' make her free, I know'd her heart 's breakin'
 "I'll give them a chance t' skip!" then I sed.
But they didn't. I found her mendin'
 An' darnin' an' bakin' th' usual way ;
 But a look in' her eyes ther' was, like unto
 A-threatenin rain on a summer day.
 He'd gone. He'd left her t' me, as took her
 Jest t' give her shelter 'n care ;
 (I know'd 'f th' brother'd lived, she'd never
 No more looked at me 'n them oxen ther').
 I watched her, an' see she was wiltin'
 She gev up singin' an' moved 'roun' so still ;
 An' a look ov hunger a-eatin' her heart out,
Thet's the kind of starvin' is sure t' kill!
 I fetched the best ov eatin' an' drinkin'
 As was t' be bought in them times out here ;
 But the summer went slidin' inte' winter,
 An' mister, with snow-fly her empty ch'er ;
 She slid away from me sort ov' quiet
 'Ith never a moan, on'y "Benny, good night ;"
 'Twas the gloom in her heart shut out th' sunshine,
 Fer the mornin' was yalla' with wondrous light.
 An' the sojer lover thet left her starvin',
 I'd like t' put a ball through his hide!
 What? Honor! Another's!! You loved her!!!
My God! You're the chap fer who she died!
 Gimme y'r hand. Ther's somethin' chokin'
 Me heart, 'r the blood hes lost its way!
 Ever since she went I'd been a-thinkin'
 As how she'd call me t' go some day.
 But now I know a'tho' it so happened
 She was mine down here by a parson's swe'r,
 It won't hold good in that land up yander.

Little gal don't need no shelter ther'.
Me an' me oxen's movin' westward,
There's mountains as goes up an' up, an' lies
Somewher' near heaven, I'll squat ther', hopin'
Fer jest one more look in her starry eyes,
As she gev' me th' day I watered them cattle
Long ago, an' thet smile went in
Straight t' me heart, an' med me better—
An' we both kin love her, an' tain't no sin ;
Fer mistakes in the best of matin's rise,
Gee, haw, ther' oxen ! gol-durn them flies !''

Slumberland Shadows.

A CHRISTMAS DRAMA FOR WEE ONES.

(All rights reserved.)

DOLLIE-DIMPLE } Earth Children.
 BESSIE-BEE }
 TEDDY } Brother and Sister of the above.
 BELLE }

THE SANDMAN—Who governs Slumberland Town.

PUCK—A mischief maker.

QUEEN OF THE FAIRIES.

FAIRIES—Dot, Dash, Chatter, Flash, Speckle, Sweet.

COSTUMES :

FAIRY QUEEN : Dressed all in white ; covered with flowers, carries a wand.

FAIRIES : Dressed all in white ; covered with colored paper stars.

SANDMAN : Page's costume of drab velvet, pink hose, three-cornered hat.

PUCK : Tights of pale yellow, blue hose ; cap with feathers.

DOLLIE AND BESSIE : Large aprons over dresses of white with silver and gilt trimmings.

TEDDY AND BELLE : Ordinary school dress.

CURTAIN RISES SHOWING A FOREST.

(This effect is produced by having tree-branches fitted into wooden blocks, which may be moved about in order to alter the scene. Chinese lanterns kept swinging during songs.) Semi-circle of fairies. Queen in the centre.

Fairies (singing) : Dreaming, dreaming,
 Lights athwart elf-land are gleaming,
 Bringing the beautiful, singing the beautiful,
 Ringing the beautiful Slumberland dreams.

(*Softly*) : Dreaming, dreaming,
 Star-eyes above us are beaming ;
 They ring us the beautiful, bring us the beautiful
 Songs that fall softly in Slumberland dreams.

(Enter the Sandman with two sandbags.
 All the Fairies bow three times.)

Sandman (swinging his sandbags) :

"Ho ! Little Elves, take care of yourselves,
 Footsteps are echoing by ;
 Our haunt is invaded : Elf-flowers look faded,
 The breath of earth blights us,
 Lo ! footsteps are nigh !"

(Fairies cower as if afraid.)

"To guard our retreat from earth clogging feet,
 This sand which brings magical sleep
 Will I throw ;" (Shakes sand about.)
 "Away little Elves ! Quick, hide yourselves !
 If you would the mysteries of earth mortals know."

(Sandman hangs a bag on each side of stage,
 upon trees. Fairies hide at each side of
 stage. Queen stands behind a tree in
 centre. Exit Sandman.)

(Enter Dolly-Dimple and Bessie-Bee, their
 arms filled with books.)

Dolly (crossly) : "Oh ! how I am wearied by lessons
 And puzzled by bothering sums ;
 My head is quite addled and muddled."

Bessie : "Hark, Dolly ! I think some one comes !" (Fairies all laugh.)

Bessie : "I heard such a queer little chuckle !
 It gave me a terrible fright." (Lights grow dim.)

Dollie : "Let's hurry away—it is almost
 As dark as the middle of night !
 Now for a race o'er the prairie"—

Bessie: What? Back to that stupid old school?
Indeed, I won't go!"

"Come, sit down here, we're free from
Our teacher's harsh rule."

(Sits down.)

Dollie (throws down her books):

"There's a lesson in music awaits me."

(Sits down.)

"With horrible squeaky loud sharps;
(Imitates) It's one, two, three! one, two, three!"

(Invisible music.)

Bessie: "Hush! I hear the playing of harps!"

(Both children rise and stand listening;
music louder, then soft.)

Both (together): "Listen! oh, what does it mean, dear?

It's coming right down from the trees!

It's running around in the grasses!"

Dollie: "It's like fairy tunes played by the breeze."

(Fairies heard singing softly.)

Fairies' song: "Steal in and out

And round about;

Sipping honey all the day;

Roses pink—violets blue;

Prairie blossoms bright and gay.

Tra-la-la-tra-la-la-tra-la-la-la-la

Tra-la-la-tra-la-la-tra-la-la-la-la.

(The children tip-toe about during the
singing, peeping, they look frightened.)

Dolly (looking over her shoulder):

"Oh! Bessie-Bee! What can it mean?"

Bessie (looking over her shoulder):

"Oh, Dollie-Dimple! we'll surely be seen!"

Dollie: "Let's hide ourselves under this pretty tree."

(Hides under the tree which the Fairy
Queen is behind.)

Bessie : "I'm not afraid." (Stamps.)

(All the fairies laugh.)

Bessie (jumps): O ! O ! ! E-ee ! ! ! E-ee ! ! !

Dolly (in a whisper) :

"Why, Bessie ! I 'magine the flowers around,
Are making that horrible laughing-like sound !"

(Fairies heard singing "Tra-la-la" as before.)

Bessie (shivering) :

"Oh, my ! I wish we were safe at home !
And school is so pleasant you know."

Dolly (shivering) : "Ye-s—Bess ! I'll never more roam"——

Both : (whisper) : "Come quick ! Let us go !

(Lights grow dimmer, the children begin
to nod sleepily.)

Dolly (yawns) : "Why ! What is this drowsiness ?
What does it mean ?" (Rubs eyes.)

Bessie (nods) : "I'm sleepy—oh, so—slee—p—y. (Yawns.)
Pray let—me—dr—e—am !"

(Both fall asleep.)

(Enter Puck, dancing.)

Puck (sings) : "You may say what you will
About humor and fun ;
About gammon and jest,
But you're out every one ;
If there's mischief abroad
Everp tongue goes a-cluck,
And all is put down
To that imp Master Puck." (Dances.)

"Now here's quite a pickle !
There's mischief to-do !
The elves and earth-children
Have got in a stew !
So to mix up the matter,

For good, or ill-luck,
I'll change Sandman's eye-dust !"

(Changes bags.)

"Pray, don't tell it was Pack !"

(Dances off stage.)

[At this moment the Fairies, led by the Queen, troop out, singing, as they march in, any pretty movement or figure.]

Song : "Steal in and out and round about,"
Sipping honey all the day;
Roses pink, violets blue,
Prairie flowers bright and gay.

Tra-la-la, tra-la-la, tra-la-la, tra-la-la, tra-la-la,
tra-la-la-la-la !"

(They form a half circle about the sleeping children.)

Fairy Queen (looking at the children asleep) :

"Highty ! tighty ! what's amiss ?
What a funny pair is this ?"

Chatter : "What funny looking things !
They haven't any wings !"

Flash : "Aren't they ugly little frights ?"

Speckle : "I guess they're cheese-mites !" (Nods.)

Dot : "I wonder where they came from ?
The odd, little creatures ?" (Cocks her head.)

Sweet : "There's something quite familiar" —

Dash : "Yes, about the features !" (Critical eye.)

Fairy Queen : "They've surely strayed here by mistake."

Chatter (dancing about) :

O ! when they see us, won't they quake !"

(Fairies all dance about, singing Tra-la-la,
tra-la-la, as before.)

Fairy Queen (sternly) :

"Why are you sleeping, naughty elves ?
You have surely lost yourselves !"

You're very naughly little girls,
You've neither pretty wings, nor curls ;

(*Stamps*) What brought you into Fairyland ?

Away !" (waves hand) " you mar our happy band."

Fairies all dance as before, singing Tra-la-
la, tra-la-la, etc.)

(The Earth Children wake up—stare in
astonishment.)

Earth Children (together) :

"O ! O ! ! who—are—you ?"

Dot : "Oh ! they are awake ! How could they wake up ?"

Dash : "I'm sure it was that imp, Puck !"

Chatter : "He's always in mischief in Lolypop town !"

Sweet : "Why, here he comes dancing upon thistle-down !"

(Enter Puck, dancing. He tweaks one
Fairy, pinches another, twirls another
around swiftly, all the while dancing
gaily.)

Puck (sings) : "Oh ! what a riot ! Oh, what a racket !

The dusty miller is beating his jacket ;

The man in the moon looks frowningly down,

He peeps in the windows of Slumberland town !"

(The fairies repeat the verse, making ap-
propriate motions.)

Puck (sings) : "The fire-bug his lantern has blown quite out,

The bees and the wasps are all in a pout,

The stars, wide-eyed, are beginning to frown,

There's trouble a-brewing in Slumberland town."

(Puck dances out.)

Dolly and Bessie (together) :

"What a jolly little fellow !

All cream and blue and yellow !"

(To Fairy Queen) "And, pray, who are you ?"

Fairy Queen (bowing) : "I'm Queen of the Fairies !

I live among wild prairie flowers ;

I gather the dew from wild sweet rose, (motions).
And live in the midst of the showers!
I laugh and dance all the summer long,
And winter is always like some sweet song.
The poplar trees with the fluttering leaves,
The tall rich grasses in waving sheaves;
The clouds that curtain the land of Night,
Where life is a dream of pure delight."

All Fairies: "Oh! Life is a dream of dear delight!"

(All fairies dance and sing "Tra-la-la.")

Dolly: "Then you do not have to go to school,
Or study verbs, or sit at a piano
A whole day, and get your fingers rapped, do you?"

Fairy Queen (laughing):

"No! my studies are the pretty clouds;
My music, the song of the wild-bird,
The buzzing of the busy bee;
My work is weaving sunbeams, (motion)
And we play 'see-saw' upon a rainbow." (motion).

All Fairies (sing, with motions):

"Playing see-saw on a rainbow,
Peek-a-boo with the stars,
Running a race with the west wind,
Pickling the sunbeams in jars;
Dancing about upon rose leaves,
The dew-drops are kisses we blow;
Peek-a-boo with the star-eyes,
And see-saw upon a rainbow."

Bessie: "Then you must be—fairies!"

Dolly: "You must be happy little fairies!"

All Fairies (dancing about):

"Oh, we are happy as shells in the sea;
Happy are we, happy are we;
Lighter and brighter than limped moonbeams,
Brighter are we, brighter are we;

Soft is our slumber, and happy our dreams,
And music the rhythm of Life's melody !"

Dollie : " Oh ! I'd like to be a fairy !"

Bessie : " So would I !"

Fairy Queen : " You are Earth Children, and cannot be fairies, unless"—

Earth Children (together) :

" Oh ! can we ever be fairies ?"

Chatter : Yes, by giving up all earthly things."

Dolly and Bessie : " Oh ! we will ! we will !"

Dot : " Your lessons ?"

Dolly : " Yes, yes !"

Dash : " Your music ?"

Bessie : " Oh, yes, yes !"

Chatter : " Your school ?"

Dolly and Bessie : " Yes, oh, yes !"

Fairy Queen : " Your mother, and—home ?"

Dolly and Bessie (thoughtfully) : " *My mother ?—my—home ?*"

[They look at each other, irresolute ; invisible music, " Home, Sweet Home," played ; the fairies march in a circle about the children. Dolly and Bessie, half-crying, look wonderingly on. Crash in the music—the aprons upon the Earth Children are whirled off and away, and they are transformed into fairies.]

(All the fairies join hands, taking in the Earth Children. They advance and retreat, dancing and singing.)

(*Song*) : " Dance, dance, dance and sing,
Fairest flowers and blossoms bring,
Pearls of dewdrops all on a string,
This is a happy day !
Dance, dance, dance and sing !
Birds and bees are now a-wing

To fairyland our prize we'll bring !
This is a happy day."

(The fairies run off, taking Dolly and Bessie
with them.)

[Enter Puck, dancing, as they go off.]

Puck (laughing) : "O ! what a joke ! O ! what a joke !
I've laughed 'till I've cried !"

(Laughs.)

Puck : "I believe I shall choke !
I've mixed up the sand !
Won't it be a surprise
If it ever gets filtered
In fairies' bright eyes ?"

(Laughs.)

(Sandman comes in slyly.)

Puck (laughs) : "I've mixed up the eye dust
Oh, what jolly fun
We'll have 'ere to-morrow,
It's done ! yes, it's done !"

(Dances out laughing.)

(Sandman shakes his fist after Puck.)

Sandman : "That fellow's up to mischief !
He makes such heaps of trouble ;
And did you hear him laughing ?
I declare, he bent quite double !
He's dancing like a sunbeam,
I know there's mischief brewing !

(Looks at sandbags.)

"Why ! some one's changed my sandbags !
So that's what he's been doing !"

(Changes the bags again.)

"Oh, what an awful muddle
It would be to be sure,
For if it got in fairy eyes
We'd never more allure."

Sandman : "That naughty Puck ! I'll tell our Queen !
He wants some real punishment ;
She'll whip him till he turns bright green !

On mischief he is ever bent !
 He's such a vain, vain fellow,
 With his jacket white and yellow."

(*Sandman* goes out—enter *Puck* hobbling, doubled up as if in great pain.)

Puck (complainingly): "I feel so badly, I can dance no more;
 I'm full up of sighs" (Groans.)
 And my tears downpour; (Sighs.)
 (Weeps.)

Puck: "My eyes with grief their pupils drown,
 And I'm smothered in grief,
 And my hopes have gone down." (Shakes his head.)
 "I know it's the mischief this day I've done!" (Sighs.)
 "I'll undo the harm, this one for that one!"
 (Changes back the bags.)

"Now, I'm myself, and quite limber my legs!
 I'm sure I could dance on a spider queen's eggs!" (Dances.)
 "What a wonderful world, and the heart, how light
 It grows, when we know we've done
 The thing which is right!" (Fairies heard singing.)

CURTAIN.

SCENE II.

A WOOD. TREES ARRANGED TO FORM LITTLE GROUPS.

(Enter *Teddy* and *Bess*, carrying baskets.
 They are gathering flowers.)

Teddy: "This is the wood where poor little sisters were lost."

Belle (shivers): "It makes me feel creepy, ugh!"

Teddy: "I think by the man in the moon" (looks up) "they were tossed!"

Belle: "Don't speak so loud! I'm afraid, aren't you?"

Teddy (plucking a flower); "Here's a blue bell!"

(Voice shrieks "O!")

Belle (jumps): "Did you hear that yell?" (Plucks a flower.)

(Voice squeaks "O!")

Teddy: "I say, did you hear that crying out?
It sounded to me like a giant's shout!"

Belle (stoops): "Here are some roses, pink and white!"

(Voices cry out "O! O!")

"Dear me! I got a most terrible fright!"

(Crying heard all around; *Teddy* and
Belle look frightened.)

Belle: "Why the—flowers are—talking!"

Teddy: "They're crying! How shocking!"

(Voices heard crying.)

(The children throw down the baskets.)

Both (scream and jump back) "Why! the grass is all red!"

Belle (crying): "I wish—we—were home—and safe—in—bed!"

(The fairies suddenly appear, rubbing themselves and limping as if
in great pain; the children do not see them.)

Belle (picks up a flower):

"Teddy, oh, look! what queer little faces!

They've eyes just like ours,

And Teddy, my gracious!

Eyes just like dear sisters,

As laughing and bright;

My heart's in a flutter,

My head feels quite light!"

Teddy (snatches flower, throws it down, tramples on it):

"I'll chuck off its head,

It's got no eyes at all;

You girls are such nineties!

Come on, let's play ball."

(*Teddy* turns and is confronted by the fairies; consternation.)

Fairies (limping and rubbing themselves).

Dot: "O! my nose!"

Dash: "O! my toes!"

Chatter: "I've got a bump on my elbow!"

Flash: "O! my eye!"

Speckle: "My arms are all awry!"

Sweet: "Somebody broke off my wee toe!"

Dot: "I don't think I'll ever be able to fly again!"

(Tries to fly.)

All Fairies (squaking): "O! I'm in such terrible pain!"

(All limp and some fall.)

Belle (awed): "You—don't mean to—say you're what we picked—up?"

Fairies (together):

"I'm a daisy!

I'm a rosebud!

I'm a bay-leaf!

I'm a butter-cup!"

Teddy (going behind a tree):

"I say, I believe we'r in for it now!

I expect there'll be a terrible row!"

Fairy Queen: "Did you not know the flowers that grow

Are delicate, rare, and sweetly mild?

Over the prairie, sweet perfume we throw,

And each little bud is nature's own child.

Fairies: The heart of the rose is all gladness;

The chalice of lily deep, oft holds a tear,

And each little weed bears its sadness;

Every leaf does its work, little dear."

Fairy Queen: "God makes everything for a purpose,

Tho' to us it may not seem quite clear."

Dot (crosely): "We are dreadfully abused!"

Dash (pouting): "We are; we're shamefully used!"

Chatter : "I've been shut up in book leaves,
And squeezed till the tears would start !"

Sweet : "I've been kissed by the daintiest maiden,
And pressed to her loving heart."

Flash : "I've been plucked for a gallant,
Who took me from fingers so small
And I've heard just the foolishhest whispers !
'Till I've blushed ; oh, I daren't tell all !"

Speckle : "The fact is, we're used just as Cupid
Is inclined to make us his dart ;
We've been vowed over, cried over, kissed over ;
And in all things we've played a queer part."

Sweet : "I've given joy to a sick child
By just smiling up in her eyes."

All Flowers (nodding) :
"That's what we like best—to comfort ;
For within flower-hearts true kindness lies."

Fairy Queen : "And each tiny bud will soft open
Just out of goodness of heart ;
And gathered by hands that touch kindly,
We play in the world a kind part."

Belle (to Teddy) : "All the lessons of life you see
Aren't taught by books in school."

Teddy : "They're a jolly queer lot ; it appears to me :
That their methods are—well, rather cool !"

Fairy Queen (rubbing her eyes) :
"My eyes feel so queer—very queer.
Now, who do you think has been here ?
Some one has shaken the poppy-red flower ;
Madragora overcomes me," (nods) "I'm drowsy !"
(All the fairies nod.)

"Ho, flowers ! wake up naughty elves !"
(Fairies droop.)

"Come, rouse up yourselves !"

No sleeping ; no slumbering ! Frown
Star-eyes upon you !"

(Nods sleepily.)

(Fairies fall down one after another.)

"We must guard those earth-mortals

Under the trees," (nods) "they are caught." (Nods.)

"In the dream-net of—Slum-ber-land-town."

(Falls down asleep.)

(Enter Puck dancing.)

Puck : "Here's a to-do ! All the Fairies asleep !

Ha ! ha ! ha ! ha ! Won't the Sandman weep ?"

(Dances about fairies.)

Ha ! ha ! mix 'em up ! Ha ! ha ! mix 'em down

Oh ! Puck's the gay fellow of Slumberland town !"

(Dances out.)

(Curtains at the back of stage part. Dollie and Bessie
lying asleep under tree, as in first scene.)

Dolly (waking up) : "La, Bessie, have I been asleep ?"

Bess : "I have had such a funny dream !"

Dolly (jumping up) : "Why, so had I—I had a peep
Into Slumber-town. How odd it did seem."

(Teddy and Belle run in.)

Teddy (shouts) : "Here's little sister !"

Belle : "Oh, girls, mama thought you were lost !"

Dolly : "I'm sorry 'twas only a dream."

Bess : "Things are not always what they seem."

Belle (reaching up) : "O ! there's a butterfly chasing a sunbeam !"

Dolly : "Bess, I believe there *are* sermons in stones ;
And lessons in little brooks."

Teddy (turning to go) : "Then hurra for home and our books !"

(The fairies run in singing with motions.)

Fairies (song)—"Playing see-saw on a rainbow ;

Peek-a-boo with the stars ;

Running a race with the west wind,

Pickling the moonbeams in jars ;
 Dancing about on the rose-leaves,
 The dew-drops are kisses we blow ;
 Peek-a-boo with the star-eyes ;
 And see-saw upon a rainbow."

(Enter Puck and the Sandman from opposite sides.)

Puck
The Sandman } (sing with motions.)

" Oh ! who will go riding to Slumberland town ?
 The gates are unbarred and the locks are let down."

(Appropriate motions.)

" The paths are paved with white thistle-down ;
 And brownies run riot in Slumberland town ;"

All together : " The horses a-riding of doughnuts are made,
 The cows in cake pastures in sugar are laid ;
 The chickens and turkeys they all gobble gold,
 And the half of its wonders have never been told.
 Butterflies dance in the sunshine all day,
 We never have work there, it always is play ;
 So under eye-lashes of golden and brown
 A-riding nid-nodding to Slumberland town.
 Oh, who will go riding to Slumberland town ?
 The locks are unbarred and the gates are let down.
 The paths are paved with white thistle-down,
 And brownies run riot in Slumberland town."

Dolly
Bess } (Shaking their heads.)

" Well, we don't want to go there, we want to go home."

(Fairies circle about the children.)

Fairies (sing coaxingly).

" We'll take you to ride on a rainbow ;
 To play hide-and-seek with the stars ;
 We'll give you dew-wine from the lily,

And pickled bee-kisses from jars.
 We'll teach you to dance on a rose-leaf,
 And wonderful things will you know,
 The milky-way to the star-land,
 Where the flowers of the elf-land blow."

Teddy: "Oh, it's all very fine I've no doubt,
 But the girls would rather go home."

Dolly }
Bess } (Nodding.) "Oh, yes, we *would* rather go home."
Belle }

The Fairies (laugh and point.)

"O! what little Sillies! Just see us dance!"
 (The fairies dance a pretty figure.)

Dolly: "We'd rather go home, and learn our lessons."

Bess: "It would be very tiresome to dance all day."
 (Enter Puck dancing.)

Puck: "Hullo! what's amiss?
 Where's the Sandman? Who is this?"
 (Looks at Teddy.)
 (Enter the Sandman throwing his dust.)

Sandman: "Here I am as prompt as you please;" (Bows.)
 "There's surely about us a peculiar breeze;" (Shivers.)
 "I've caught a cold; I'm going to sneeze!" (Sneezes.)
 (Earth children all run off.)

Puck: "There's a saying as old as the hills.
 There is ever a cure for the worst of ills;
 In elf-land as well as on earth, the chase
 After ease; and getting things out of place."
 "So from this little story in very bad rhyme,
 Take notice—for everything there's a time.
 And the very best plan, as you all may see,
 (Motion.) Is for you to be you, and me to be me."

(Fairies, Sandman, Puck all join hands;
 the earth children re-appear at the
 rear of the stage; the lanterns be-
 gin to swing. All sing.)

"Oh, who will go riding to Slumberland town?
The gates are unbarred and the bars are let down;
So under eye-lashes of golden and brown
A riding nid-nodding to Slumberland town."

CURTAIN.

AT BARRACKS.

At Barracks.

It was at a Barrack dance we met
Long, long ago in the days gone by ;
Last night again through the deep meshed net
Of Time, from the grave you came Dear, nigh,
And hallowed the hour with some wondrous gleam
Of the old-time love, as in some vague dream
We half grasp the substance of things that seem.

And like a ghost of the long ago—
(Some sweet familiar bar, I think)
Of the 'trancing music caused the flow,
And the tears rose up to my eyelids' brink,
The walls sword-starred, and the tinted light
A flash of scarlet with golden gleam,
The click of a spur, and a mist of white
Weaving onward and back in that living stream,
Brought back with the music some eerie thrill,
And some tender touch crept in the strain,
The throb of my heart I could not still
Nor stifle the onward rush of pain.

Your sweet sad face crowned in gold a-wave,
Rose up from the depths of memory's cell,
And the prairie rose your fingers gave,
Brought its perfume back ! Then the rhyming swell
Burst anew and I reeled for the perfumed hair
Touching mine gold waved, crown'd a form of white,
And a prairie rose close nestled there !
O, Love ! Did your spirit come last night ?